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FRA ANGELICO.

From the representation of him in the Fresco of the "Last Juagment," by Fra Bartolommeo, in Santa Maria Nuova, Florence.

"The whole world without Art would be one great wilderness"

FRA ANGELICO

BY CATHERINE MARY PHILLIMORE

AUTHOR OF VARIOUS ARTICLES ON ITALIAN LITERATURE

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PREFACE.

THE writer has been guided in the difficult task of treating the early period of the Italian Renaissance by the criticisms and opinions of some of the most recent Italian authorities; especially those of the great scholar Signor Milanesi, in his new edition of Vasari, the writings of the Dominican Padre Marchese, and others whose names appear in the Bibliography.

The work has been further assisted by the careful researches, among the documents of the "Libreria Magliabecchiana," of a correspondent at Florence, who is the author of the work on the second period of the Renaissance, in this series (*i.e.*, Fra Bartolommeo and Andrea del Sarto).

In the arrangement of a treatise like the present, which must, of necessity, deal with the critical as well as the historical side of the Renaissance, the writer has had the benefit of a course of study in the Art Classes of Mrs. E. M. Ward. Besides the technical instruction admirably imparted in these classes, the writer had also the privilege of appealing in all difficult points of Art criticism to the large experience of this eminent and accomplished Artist.

C. M. P.

October, 1880.

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INTRODUCTION.

AS the fourteenth century will always remain an epoch in the history of Art, on account of the decoration of the Campo Santo, by Giotto and his pupils; so, the dawn of the fifteenth century marks yet another step in its progress.

Hitherto, Pisa had been the cradle of the early genius of Italy. Her extensive commerce had first introduced the taste for Art into the country, and her *Campo Santo*, the first public work of art, became the scene of competition between the great painters of the age. But in the year 1406 Pisa fell into the hands of the Florentines. Deprived not only of her artificers, but of nearly all her citizens, it was vain to hope that the arts would any longer find a home in the shattered and destroyed city. They were, however, gladly welcomed in Florence, whose citizens in the first flush of pride at their new conquest, were eager to adorn their capital, and to make it worthy of their increased dignity and power.

Cosimo de' Medici—called the father of his country—was then at the head of the state; to be succeeded by the great patron of Literature and Art, Lorenzo the Magnificent. The hereditary taste for the fine arts in the Medici family has been the theme of all the historical annals which record their reigns.

Their palace became the Lyceum of philosophers, the Arcadia of poets, and the academy of painters. The talents of Paolo Uccello, Masaccio, Filippo Lippi, Benozzo Gozzoli, Sandro Botticelli, and the Ghirlandaij, were developed under these princely auspices; and the painters in their turn showed a grateful sense of this favour by immortalising their protectors.

With the course of centuries it would almost seem as if the two changed places, the patron owing his existence in the memory of mankind to the painter, who, according to the beautiful conception of a modern Italian poet, becomes a king.

> "But not of those
> Before whose face the trembling subjects bow.
> * * * *
> For in the mind's vast continent a realm
> Called Painting lies—one of the favoured spots
> Where Beauty loves to dwell.
> There, hand in hand,
> See Grace with Nature lead her ceaseless dance;
> There gorgeous Fantasy with Pomp displays
> Her retinue of thought,—ideas arrayed
> In colours brilliant as the rainbow's arch,
> But more perpetual."

And over this kingdom he rules with undisputed sway.

> "The Crown which glitters on his head
> The Universe unanimous bestows,
> His sceptre's sway all living nations own;
> Ay, and those yet to come—
> * * * *
> Lord of the future." [1]

"Lord," indeed, "of the future," when we perceive that the lapse of more than four centuries has not diminished the

[1] *Canto di Aleardo Aleardi*, pp. 180—183.

interest in their paintings, nor dimmed the freshness of colours which have been thus poetically and aptly described.

Many a long-forgotten member of the House of Medici still lives on the canvas of his *protégé* in the portraits of the Eastern Kings offering gifts before the Shrine at Bethlehem. Perhaps the painter may have caught the idea from the stately mien of his patron in the rich garments of some newly-acquired Florentine dignity; perhaps, even it may have been suggested to him that it would be well to accustom the people to the sight of the regal sceptre and robes which were afterwards to be associated with that proudly ambitious house.

Whatever the source, the art of painting may be said to have profited by this introduction of portraiture which necessitated a strict imitation of nature. There is no need to point out how great this advantage was in cases where the accidental beauty of the subject inspired the artist's treatment:—witness, the beautiful figure of "Ginevra de' Benci," who appears so often in the paintings of Ghirlandajo in the choir of the Church of Santa Maria Novella.

The patronage of the Medici stimulated the good taste of the citizens, not only of Florence, but also of the neighbouring communities, who vied with one another in adorning their cities and churches, at a time when religious feeling was prominent in art.

To this spirit the cathedral in Florence was in itself a striking witness: and many other churches—their walls covered with pious paintings by the devout pupils of Giotto's school—soon reared their heads in the city.

We might take for one example the painting formerly ascribed to Simone di Martino, in the Spanish chapel of Sta. Maria Novella. So "noble a piece of pictorial philosophy

and divinity," Mr. Ruskin tells us, that it took him five weeks to fully appreciate one quarter of it.[1]

This spirit, which in the fourteenth century more especially revealed itself in paintings, found a still wider scope in the fifteenth century in sculpture, statuary, bronze, gold, and silver work.

There was a great demand for statues and bas-reliefs to adorn the new Cathedral, the Baptistery, the Church of Or' San' Michele, and others; and soon Donatello, Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, Filarete, Rosselli, I Pollaiuoli, and Verrocchio produced their wonderful works.

From such masters as these the youth of Florence learnt the first principles of their profession—principles at once broad and universal, applicable to all the branches of Art.

Thus it would frequently occur that the same artificer would be a sculptor, painter, a bronze-founder, a goldsmith, an enamel-worker, and even an architect besides. Such was the dawn of the Renaissance in Florence, the first among the cities of Italy to bask in the sunshine of the golden age of Art.

[1] *Mornings in Florence.* IV. The Vaulted Book, p. 108.

PRECURSORS OF FRA ANGELICO.

CHAPTER I.

STEFANO FIORENTINO, UCCELLO, AND MASOLINO.

STEFANO FIORENTINO. Born 1301. Died 1350.

"Facesti come quei che va di notte
Che porta il lume dietro, e à sè non giova
Ma dopo sè fa le persone dotte."[1]

1 *Purg.* xxii. 66–69.

THE servile imitation of the Greek artists was at an end. Giotto and his pupils had released art from the swathing-bands of infancy, yet still the untaught steps tottered along the difficult road, while the hands feebly groped in the dark after the hidden power which was shortly to be held with so firm and enduring a grasp.

But at present the figures seemed to slide out of the pictures, the buildings were not in perspective, and the art of foreshortening was imperfectly understood.

Stefano Fiorentino was more alive to these difficulties than capable of remedying them; yet, in his picture of *Lucifer*

[1] For translations see Appendix.

cast out of Heaven, he made a bold attempt to grapple with them; and his treatment of the falling angels was so great an advance in the art of foreshortening upon anything hitherto attempted, that it obtained for him the nickname of "*Scimia della natura*" (the Ape of Nature).[1]

It was the period when the study of Nature was beginning to exercise its fascinating influence upon Art. A general feeling prevailed among the artists that this class of study was of more avail than the mere imitation of even a perfect model. But, as might be expected at first, their studies were without discrimination; new difficulties assailed them at every turn which they paused to analyse and examine, and in many cases the end was lost in the eager pursuit of the means by which it was to be attained.

Many a lifetime was spent in the single effort to master one of the various branches of art under this new and difficult aspect, such as perspective, light and shade, or the chemistry of colours. We could have no better illustration of this than the life of Paolo Uccello.

PAOLO UCCELLO. Born 1397. Died 1475.

Paolo di Dono, commonly called Uccello, was born at a time when the science of perspective was the chief object of research among the great masters in art. Brunelleschi was about to impart its rudiments to Masaccio; Donatello was finding out its adaptation to sculpture; and Ghiberti for the first time was applying its principles to bas-relief,[2] in the gates of S. Giovanni.

Paolo Uccello was so fortunate as to be associated with him in this immortal work. He began life as a goldsmith,

[1] Vasari, Milanesi's ed. 1878-9, p. 450. [2] Vasari, note to p. 221.

and in this capacity was apprentice to Ghiberti, at the time when he was engaged upon the second gate of the Baptistery. Paolo had learnt the rudiments of his art from the mathematician Giovanni Manetti, and had specially devoted himself to the study of perspective with an enthusiasm which led him to sacrifice much in order to obtain proficiency in the coveted science. The great sculptor Donatello, his intimate friend, pointed out to him that he was taking the shadow for the substance.

"Eh, Paolo," he said to him, on finding him absorbed in some of the most intricate problems; "this perspective of yours makes you abandon what is certain for that which is uncertain." [1]

But no persuasion could induce him to give up a study which was the delight of his life. It is said that he would pass whole nights and days consecutively working out his problems, and that to the reiterated entreaties of his wife that he would take some rest, he would only reply—"Oh che dolce cosa è la prospettiva" ("How delightful is perspective"). His whole genius was concentrated upon this study, and we can trace in his works his gradual progress towards the goal which he set before him—the earlier revealing his struggles to represent the foreshortened parts, and perspective lines, the latter the high degree of perfection to which he afterwards attained, either in his buildings and colonnades, in which he conveys the idea of a vast distance in a small space, or in his treatment of figures, which he foreshortens with a success hitherto unknown to the pupils of Giotto. Still the bas-relief treatment which he had learned when an apprentice to Ghiberti always appears in his pictures. He was, in truth, more of a sculptor than a painter; nor is it known from whom he learned actually to paint, though, as has been already observed, the sister arts were practised at the same time in the various studios of Florence.[2]

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878-9, p. 205.

[2] See Introduction.

His first pictures were in fresco, in the Hospital of Lelmo;[1] these, with several others of his paintings, have perished. The most important which remain to us are—

(1.) His battle pieces.

These were originally in the garden of the Bartolini at Gualfonda, near Florence, and they contained portraits of Paolo Orsini, Ottobuono da Parma, Luca da Canale, Carlo Malatesta da Rimini, all famous captains of the day. One of these paintings only remains in the Uffizi, another is in the Louvre, the third is in the National Gallery.[2] This last one is said to be the best of the set. It represents the *Battle of Sant' Egidio*, July 7, 1416, "in which Carlo Malatesta, Lord of Rimini, and his nephew, Galeazzo, were taken prisoners by Braccio di Montone. From the fragments of arms, etc., strewed upon the ground, the battle has been already fought; and the incident represented appears to be an attempt at rescue; which supposition is strengthened by the fact that Malatesta is marching under a strange standard. Of the many armed knights on horseback represented, only four are engaged, but all except Malatesta and his nephew have their faces concealed by their visors. The young Galeazzo, not yet a knight, carries his bassinet in his hand. The figure lying on the ground to the left is an illustration of the painter's love of foreshortening. In the background is a hedge of roses mixed with pomegranate and orange trees, and some hilly ground behind." The picture is in tempera on wood, 6 ft. high by 10 ft. 5 in. in width.

The details of each and all of these paintings show that Uccello was already reaping the harvest of his careful studies in perspective, but the labour bestowed upon them was too

[1] Lelmo or Lemmo, afterwards San Matteo, and, since 1784, the "Accademia delle Belle Arti." It was so called from its founder, Lemmo Balducci, whose bust is still there, and whose coat of arms can be seen outside the building in the corner between the Via della Sapienza and the Via Ricasoli.—Vasari, ed. 1878-9, note to p. 206.

[2] No. 583.

evident—and the perspective appears as the end and object of the picture instead of a means of assisting the illusion.

The secret of

"L'arte che tutto fa nulla si scopre,"

Paolo Uccello and many others had yet to learn. We do not know the exact date of these pictures, but as the battle which forms the subject of the last was fought in 1416, they must have been painted subsequent to that date.

(2.) His portrait of the Englishman, Condottiere Hawkwood, in S. Maria del Fiore at Florence.

This was executed in 1436, and shows what great progress Uccello had made in the interval in the art of foreshortening. It was painted in *terra verde*—an imitation of a stone sepulchre having a bracket high up on the wall drawn as if seen from below—a pedestal resting on the sepulchre, on this the profile of a horse carrying the "Condottiere." Both horse and man were of colossal size, but for some reason or other the work was not approved of by the Florentines, and the archives of the Duomo record an order "to take down the equestrian figure which is not properly painted by Paolo Uccello, and to repaint it in *terra verde*." [1]

It is not positively known whether the *Portrait of Hawkwood*, still to be seen in the Cathedral at Florence, is the first or second of Paolo's productions. The hostile criticism may be in part ascribed to the action given by the artist to the horse. He makes it rest only on one fore, and one hind leg; for a long time this made it the subject of much discussion. It has since been pronounced correct and true to nature, Fossombroni, in his memorandum as to the motion of animals, declaring that:

"Paolo Uccello, who has been the object of such fierce attack on account of his painting of the horse in the Duomo

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878-9, p. 212.

at Florence, because the horse has both feet raised on the right side, is as much in the right as Giovan Bologna, who modelled his horse in the same manner." [1] Or we might instance Donatello's horse of Gattamellata at Padua, which has precisely the same action. It is curious that the same discussion should have been revived a few years ago by the action of Miss Thompson's horse in her famous picture of the *Roll Call*.

(3.) His frescoes in S. Maria Novella.

These were perhaps the most considerable of his works, and display both the result of his indefatigable studies, and his natural gift for drawing animals. Vasari tells us that had he spent the same labour upon the study of the figure and animals from the life, as upon the problems of perspective, he would have been the Bassano of his age. In the *Creation of Animals*, the subject of the first fresco, he found ample scope for the exercise of this special gift. Vasari describes with enthusiasm portions of this fresco which have since perished—from the lions painted to the life, as though about to spring upon each other, down to the fishes and birds; these latter so admirably rendered as to give the artist the nickname of "Uccello" (bird), which has ever since remained by him.

The *Creation of Man*, the most perfect of the paintings so far as preservation is concerned, the *Temptation*, and the *Expulsion*, form the subjects of the adjoining frescoes. In each of them the landscapes should be noticed, as Paolo was the first to bestow care and attention in rendering them. The *Building of the Ark* is supposed to be by another hand. But the *Deluge* bears the unmistakable marks of Paolo's treatment in its motion and force, the masterly drawing of the figures and animals, and the expression of the different affections—terror, anger, and dismay.

"As to perspective and anatomy, sufficient is to be found

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878-9, note to p. 212.

THE DELUGE. BY PAOLA UCCELLO.

In Santa Maria Novella, Florence.

in this one fresco for tracing the exact picture of Uccello's talent; and for gaining the conviction, that he had mastered the problem of retreating lines to various vanishing points on a common horizon, or in the definition of circles and curves at different distances, and on numerous planes. His masterly foreshortening in floating corpses must have astonished the men of his time." [1]

His perspective again stood him in good stead in diminishing the distant forms. Two more scenes from the life of Noah complete the set. In one of these, *Noah's Sacrifice*, Paolo seems to have reached the climax of his ambition.

Indeed, Uccello's idea of his art, which he wished to convey to posterity, would not have disgraced a later stage of the Renaissance, and was summed up in five portraits which he painted and always kept by him—Giotto, as a painter, the luminary of art; Filippo di Ser Brunelleschi, for architecture; Donatello, for sculpture; Giovanni Manetti, for geometry and mathematics; and himself for perspective and animal painting.

Paolo's works out of Florence are confined to Padua and Urbino. At Padua he worked at the same time as Donato, and painted in the entrance of the Casa di' Vitaliani, some giants in *terra verde*, which were highly esteemed by Andrea Mantegna. At Urbino, late in life when he was about seventy-two years old, he was invited to paint an altar-piece by the brotherhood of Corpus Cristi, but this is no longer in existence; though it is suggested as a possibility that it may exist under a different name—that of Giusto of Ghent in the church of S. Agatha.

Another, among many, of the interesting works of Uccello which have been lost to us, was a predella of an altar-piece at S. Maria Maggiore at Florence, of which one panel was painted by Masaccio. The curious paintings in the Loggia de Peruzzi at Florence have also perished. They represented the elements as four animals—the earth as a mole, water as

[1] Crowe and Cavalcaselle's *Hist. of Painting in Italy*, vol. ii. p. 295.

a fish, fire as a salamander, air as a chameleon, but never having seen a chameleon, and deceived by the likeness of name, he represented this latter as a camel with its mouth open drinking in air.[1]

A rather sad anecdote closes the account of Uccello's indefatigable efforts. He was employed to paint the portrait of S. Thomas, above the door of the church of S. Tommaso in the Mercato Vecchio.

Paolo intended that this picture should embody the result of his life-long labours, and carefully concealed it from the sight of every one till it should be done. Donato inquired with curiosity what was the work which he so studiously veiled from all eyes. Paolo replied that he should not see it till it was done, but that it would be a sight worth waiting for.

Donato was content to wait in the expectation of so great a work of art, till, one day passing by chance the Mercato Vecchio at a time when Paolo was at work, the painting was uncovered, and the artist asked him his opinion.

Donato examined it narrowly, and then said, "Why, Paolo! now when it is the time to cover it up, you have displayed it!"

This opinion of a work which he had intended for a *chef d'œuvre*, so disheartened Paolo, that he had no longer nerve to show himself in Florence; and he shut himself up in his house, plunging once more into his favourite problems of perspective. He died in his eighty-fifth year, 1475, and was buried in the church of the S. Maria Novella in the tomb of his father.[2] A tardy justice was rendered to his talents in many epigrams and couplets, of which the following is one:—

"Zeusi et Parrasio ceda et Polignoto,
Ch'io fei l'arte una tacita natura
Diei affetto et forza a ogni mia figura,
Vola agli uccelli, a' pesci il corso e'l noto."

---

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878-9, p. 21.

[2] Ibid, p. 217.

Paolo Uccello's Works.

His genuine works are not to be found in the public galleries,[1] with the exception of three out of four of the battle-pieces painted originally in the Bartolini Gardens, and now

(1.) In the Uffizi at Florence. (No. 29, 1st Corridor.)
(2.) In the Ex-Campana Collection of the Louvre.
(3.) In the National Gallery. (No. 583.)

The Equestrian Portrait of Hawkwood in the Duomo at Florence.

The Frescoes in the Cloisters of S. Maria Novella.

The Giants in the Casa dei Vitaliani at Padua.

MASOLINO DA PANICALE. Born 1382. Died 1447.

We select Masolino da Panicale as the next instance among the Florentine artists who mark the transition from the old to the new manner.

The son of Cristoforo di Fino "an imbiancatore," he, Tommaso, was born at Panicale di Val d'Elsa, whence his name is derived. Like so many of the Florentine artists he was, as a child, trained as a goldsmith; at the age of eighteen he learned painting under Gherardo della Starnina. Vasari tells us that he afterwards studied in Rome, and that while there he decorated the hall of the Casa Orsino Vecchia in Monte Giordano, but there seems to be a doubt, which can never now be solved (as the frescoes have long ago perished), whether they are to be ascribed to Masolino or to Giottino.[2] Altogether

[1] Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. ii. p. 299.
[2] Vasari, ed. 1878-9, vol. iii. p. 264.

the early records of Masolino's works have to be received with caution, owing to the confusion which not unnaturally arose between two painters of nearly the same name and date—"Masolino" and "Masaccio," both being corruptions of the Christian name "Tommaso."

To make the matter still more complicated, a third painter of less distinction, but still with the same nickname, "Maso" (son of Cristoforo Braccia), existed at the same time, and worked under the great Ghiberti at the gates of S. Giovanni. This is proved by records extant, and as Masolino's style would barely support the theory of his having been the pupil of the great sculptor, it is possible that Vasari may have been misled by the similarity of names in his statement to that effect.[1]

But turning away from these doubts and uncertainties, recent discoveries have revealed to us some of Masolino's undeniable work signed with his name.

The Frescoes of Castiglione di Olona.

The Church of Castiglione di Olona, in the province of Como, between Tradate and Varese, was built upon the site of an ancient castle by Cardinal Branda di Castiglione in 1422. It was dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary, and SS. Lawrence and Stephen; and Masolino da Panicale was chosen by the Cardinal to decorate his new church with frescoes. These he completed in 1428. For years they have been concealed by whitewash, and were only rescued in the year 1843 by the exertions of the "Abate" Malvezzi, who had further the intention of publishing a series of lithographs of the long-concealed treasure, but receiving no support, was obliged to abandon his intention. The subjects of the frescoes are representations of incidents taken from the lives of the Virgin, and the saints to whom the church is dedicated.

In the vault above the altar are the scenes from the life

[1] Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. i. p. 513.

of the Blessed Virgin, the *Annunciation*, the *Marriage with S. Joseph*, the *Nativity of Christ*, the *Adoration of the Magi*, the *Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin*. Of these two last but little remains. The historical interest of these frescoes centres in that of the *Nativity*, in which the founder of the church, Cardinal Branda, appears as one of the kneeling figures, and in a scroll to the right is the inscription, "Masolinus de Florentia Pinxit." Scenes from the life of *S. Lawrence* and *S. Stephen* are represented on the walls of the choir, which is of an octangular form. They are in two different groups, the acts of S. Lawrence on the one side, and those of S. Stephen on the other. The exact date is unhappily lacking, though one may form a guess at it, from a bas-relief in the lunette above the architrave of the entrance door of the church, of the same period, but by another hand. This bas-relief, of considerable merit, represents the Virgin enthroned, with the Infant Saviour in the act of blessing Cardinal Branda, who kneels on the left-hand side, supported by S. Lawrence and one of the popes; on the opposite side are SS. Ambrose and Stephen, and by the latter of these two saints the date 1428 is engraved on the marble—the same date runs round the upper and lower cornice of the architrave, where are the figures of the four Evangelists, and these bearing the date 1435 we are led to suppose that the decoration of the church and baptistery occupied about seven years.

The frescoes in the Baptistery represent scenes from the life of *S. John the Baptist:*

"The Baptistery is built in the form of a parallelogram with a tribune of the same shape, but smaller dimensions, attached to it. Moving to the right as he enters the Baptistery, the spectator will notice, on the entrance wall, traces of figures in a temple. On the next niche is the daughter of Herodias before Herod with the usual attendant episodes; by the side of the arch leading into the tribune, the execution of S. John. The rest of the Baptistery is

denuded of fresco except in that part which faces the dance of the daughter of Herodias, where Zacharias may be seen writing the name of his new-born son. In the vaulting of the arch leading into the tribune are six saints, and in the key-stone, the date of 1435 painted of a smoke-colour, and apparently modern. In the tribune, S. John, on the wall to the left, preaches to a multitude; in the lunette and sides of the end wall, he baptizes the Saviour, and is brought before Herod, whilst on the face to the right, he appears in prison. The ceiling of the Baptistery, divided as usual by diagonals, contains the four evangelists, that of the tribune the Saviour in a glory of angels."[1]

In this series of frescoes, the figures of the four evangelists are the best preserved, and in the least changed portions we can trace a careful and delicate handling, an excellent method of colouring, both in the heads and the flesh tints. The colours in the drapery have been absorbed by the damp, the distemper employed being less tenacious than that used for the flesh tints.[2]

These undoubted works of Masolino da Panicale have given rise to much discussion, whether those ascribed to him in the Brancacci Chapel are his genuine work. It is argued that the style of the work is totally different; and we are told that Masolino began them, and died before they were finished, leaving Masaccio to complete the work. Now Masaccio died in 1428, so Masolino survived him many years. Again, documents still extant record that shortly after Masolino had been admitted into the Guild of the Speziali, 1423, he entered the service of Filippo Scolari, *Obergespann* of Temeswar, commonly called Pippo Spano. Spano is, perhaps,

[1] Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. i. p. 503.

[2] The account of these frescoes, and sketches taken from them, were supplied to Milanesi for his new edition of Vasari by several artists and amateurs of the fine arts who visited them for that purpose.—Vasari, note to p. 272.

a corruption of *Obergespann*.[1] "Pippo Spano" was a Ghibelline by birth, and, on that account, an exile from Florence. He served the King of Hungary, first as a captain, and afterwards as a statesman, when he was made Obergespann of Temesvar. His wealth, of which fabulous accounts are given, was employed in building churches, and then sending to his native country for artists to decorate them. Among these artists was Masolino; to whom, according to the inscription just cited, the heirs of "Pippo" owed a sum of 360 florins. This was in the year 1427.

In 1428 he painted the Castiglione frescoes. There is no record of his return to Florence, so if he had any share in the frescoes in the Brancacci Chapel, it must have been previous to his work at Castiglione.

This is admitted as just possible, and, while the latest commentators on Vasari[2] recognise the force of these arguments, they do not consider them sufficiently convincing to withdraw from Masolino the paintings hitherto assigned to him in their apportionment of the frescoes among the three artists.[3]

But the common theory, that Masolino was prevented from finishing his work by death, is obviously incorrect: the Castiglione frescoes were executed subsequent to those attributed to Masolino in the Brancacci Chapel.

As Paolo Uccello became the slave of perspective, so Masolino gave himself up in turn to the study of the detail of form to the sacrifice of composition, in his eagerness to depict nature as he saw it. He is said by some to have been a great master of chiaroscuro.

As to his colouring, the damaged state of his frescoes

[1] Hungarian title, signifying a Supreme Count.

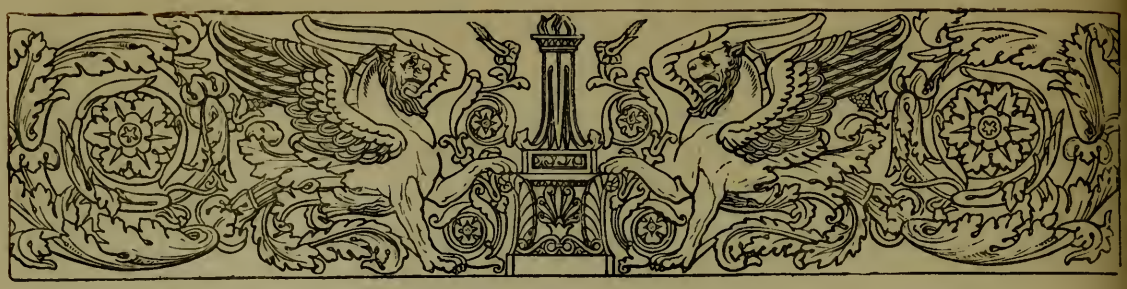
[2] Vasari, ed. 1878-9, vol. ii. pp. 265–273.

[3] Viz., the *Preaching of S. Peter*, the *Healing of the Lame Man at the Beautiful Gate by SS. Peter and Paul*, and the *Resuscitation of Petronilla* (Tabitha). It has also been called the *Raising of Jairus' Daughter*, *Adam and Eve beneath the Tree of Knowledge*.—Ibid. p. 324.

would make it difficult to give an opinion, but the system employed was the distemper ("*a tempera*"), which, until the invention of oils, was a general practice of the Italian artists. The colours were first moistened with water, and afterwards thickened into consistency by some glutinous mixtures, white of egg or the juice of the young shoots of the fir-tree. Fra Angelico's numerous specimens convey the best idea of this method of colouring. The same mechanism was used in the miniature painting on vellum. In fresco painting the colours were laid on while the plaster, spread over the surface to be painted, was fresh and wet; they afterwards sank into the surface, became incorporated with it, and became as durable as the substance which received them.

No one knows the origin of the invention, but it dates as far back as the Egyptians, from whom it was borrowed by the Greeks. The paintings of Polygnotus at Delphi are said to have been in fresco, and the mechanism of the art, which required great dexterity and quickness of hand, is said to have been better understood then than ever afterwards, even in the time of Raphael.

Besides the frescoes of Castiglione, a few other vestiges of Masolino's painting still remain in Lombardy; but there is so great an uncertainty about them that they cannot be cited as his genuine works. It is supposed that Paolo Schiavo was one of Masolino's pupils, and that he did credit to his master's teaching in the foreshortening and colouring of his figures. But of this the painting of the *Madonna between two Saints* on the wall of the Canto de' Nelli at Florence is produced as a solitary example.



CHAPTER II.

MASACCIO. Born 1401. Died 1428.

"Pinsi, e la mia pittura al ver fupari ;
L'atteggai, l'avvivai, le diedi il moto,
Le diedi affetto—Insegni il Bonarroto
A tutti gli altri, e da me solo impari."

MASACCIO was the son of a notary, Ser Giovanni di Simone Guidi, of Castello San Giovanni in the Val d'Arno.

He was born on St. Thomas's Day, 1401. Hence his Christian name of "Tommaso," of which the corruption "Maso" had shortly the derogatory termination "accio" affixed to it, on account of the boy's slovenly and disorderly habits. It has ever since remained by the painter, and only under this name are his illustrious works known to the world.

From his early youth he showed an extraordinary natural ability. This, when developed by continual study and the training of such masters as Ghiberti, Donatello, and Brunelleschi, enabled Masaccio to reach a summit of excellence hitherto unattained by the Florentine artists.

He was among the first to introduce freedom and ease into art, facing the difficulties with confidence, and overcoming them without betraying the effort which his victory had cost

him. We might take as an instance the practice, which, with some few exceptions, generally prevailed, of representing the figure poised on the points of the toes, to avoid the foreshortening of the feet. Masaccio despised this awkward subterfuge, and succeeded in foreshortening the foot in such a manner that the old ungraceful practice was, after his time, never resorted to again.

If his drawing was admirable, his colouring was equal to it, being famous for that almost untranslatable Italian word "morbidezza"; which combines the expression of softness, flexibility, and texture in the rendering of the flesh tints.

It is not clear, owing to the confusion, already alluded to in the chapter on Masolino, between the names and dates of the two painters, whether Masaccio learnt of Masolino. The recent discoveries throw great doubt upon this point, representing that—as Masolino entered the Guild of the Speziali in 1423, and Masaccio in 1421—Masaccio must have entered it two years before his master! In 1424 we find the record of his being enrolled in the Guild of Painters. He worked in Pisa, and in Florence, before going to Rome, but these works have perished.

At Rome he acquired a great reputation in his decoration of one of the chapels in the Church of S. Clemente, with frescoes representing the *Passion of our Saviour*, and scenes from the *Life of S. Catherine*. These early works, though full of the promise of his early genius, are not to be compared to his later productions.

The *Crucifixion* is represented on the wall facing the entrance. One of the groups in the foreground, of the Virgin in a swoon supported by the three Maries, was afterwards copied by Perugino. The *Legend of S. Catherine* occupies the wall to the left of this series; the finest composition and the best preserved is that which represents the *Defeat of the Doctors before Maxentius.*

"S. Catherine, standing in the centre of a hall, at whose sides eight doctors are seated, propounds and enforces her arguments by the action of one hand on the other. Her reasoning seems chiefly directed to one on the foreseat to the left, who looks up, whilst his arms are crossed on a book resting on his knee. Maxentius sits on a throne at the bottom of the room in an attitude of majestic repose, and his face is affected by surprise."[1]

There were several other pictures executed by Masaccio at Rome; one of these, the *Portraits of the Pope Martin V. and the Emperor Sigismund*, suggests the date of his sojourn there, which coincides with that of the re-appearance of the Plague at Florence (1417).

In 1420, the return from exile of the Medici, who had always been his friends and patrons, enticed him back to Florence. Vasari tell us that Cosimo, il Vecchio, was then in power, but the date will not support the theory; and it was more probably Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici, whose portrait was twice painted by Masaccio; once as a figure in a procession, and again in a picture which once existed in the Casa Simon Corsi.

Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici is known in the history of Florence as the inventor of the Income Tax Schedule, which supplied not only himself but posterity with information as to the lives and estates of his subjects.

By these means we know that Masaccio was very poor, that he lived with his mother and brother Giovanni, also a painter (but far inferior to Masaccio), in a house in the quarter S. Croce, and that Tommaso kept a shop near the old Badia, that he had many debts, and was obliged to place some of his property in pawn. Happily for posterity this struggling existence did not cramp his powers nor fetter his genius.

His frescoes in the Brancacci Chapel of the church of the Carmine in Florence, while they were the wonder of his own

[1] See Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. i. p. 522.

time, have ever since formed as marked an era in the history of painting as Ghiberti's gates in the history of sculpture.

Before beginning upon this task, he gave, as a sample of his powers, the *San Paolo* in the bell-room, but this painting, which Vasari tells us was so noble a figure that it lacked only the power of speech, has since perished. It was drawn from the life, and was the portrait of the Gonfaloniere Bartolo d' Angiolino Angiolini.[1]

It was one of the first and most successful examples of Masaccio's triumph over the difficulty of foreshortening the feet.

While he was engaged upon this first example, the church of the Carmine was consecrated, and Masaccio was interrupted in his work to commemorate the event in a fresco. Masaccio represented the procession in *terra verde* above the door of the convent, exactly as it issued from the cloisters on that occasion. Among the groups of citizens who followed in its wake, portraits are introduced of Brunelleschi, Donatello, Masolino, Felice Brancacci[2] (the founder of the chapel), Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici, and others, including the porter of the convent with the key of the door in his hand.

This work was considered a feat, because of the accuracy of the perspective of the procession, the diminishing proportions of the figures, and the care with which he represented their different statures.[3]

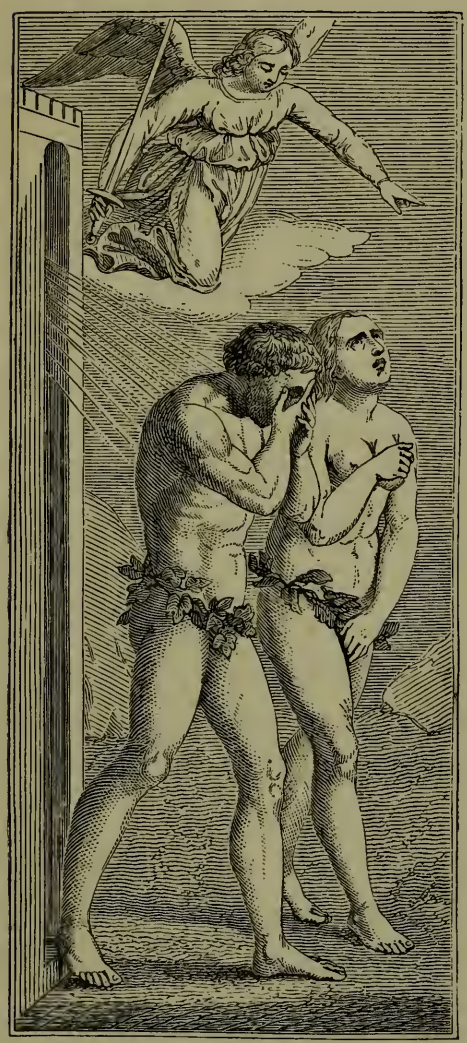
After the completion of this fresco, Masaccio returned to work at the Brancacci Chapel. The chapel is in the form of

[1] Bartoli d'Angiolino Angiolini—del quartiere Santo Spirito—was born in 1373, and held many offices under the republic between the years 1406 and 1432.

[2] The disputed point, as to which of the Brancacci was the founder of the chapel, has been set at rest by the discovery of the will of Felice Brancacci. See Vasari, ed. 1878, note to p. 296.

[3] This fresco has also perished, although the original design is said to be still extant in private hands. See Lanzi, *Storia pittorica della Italia*, vol. i. p. 50.

a parallelogram, and three out of the four sides are covered with frescoes divided into twelve compartments, of which four are large and oblong, and the rest narrow and upright. The two frescoes immediately on each side as you enter represent—the one, *Adam and Eve in Paradise*, the other, their *Expulsion* from it. The rest of the paintings represent scenes from the *Life of S. Peter*, and the two exceptions are said to have been chosen with design, because of the legend that S. Peter was keeper of the gates of Paradise.



THE EXPULSION FROM PARADISE.
BY MASACCIO.

It is perhaps no wonder that these frescoes, forming so important a feature in the progress of art, should have been the subject of prolonged and eager discussion, as to the exact share which may be attributed to each of the painters who were engaged upon them.

The learned commentator on the latest edition of Vasari gives us the result of his careful sifting of the question to this effect, in assigning the following to Masaccio :—

(1) The *Expulsion from Paradise.*
(2) The *Tribute Money.*
(3) The *Resuscitation of the King's Son* (begun by Masaccio and finished by Filippino Lippi).
(4) *S. Peter "in Cathedrâ."*

THE RESUSCITATION OF THE KING'S SON. BY MASACCIO.

In the Brancacci Chapel, in Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence.

(5) The *Infirm healed by the Shadow of SS. Peter and John.*
(6) *S. Peter baptizing.*
(7) *S. Peter distributing Alms to the Poor.*[1]

Among the most notable of the series illustrating the life of S. Peter is—

(1) The fresco representing *S. Peter taking the Tribute Money out of the Mouth of the Fish.*[2] A wonderful truthfulness is given in the treatment of S. Peter, whose face is dark from stooping over the fish. The surrounding apostles appear as if alive; the one on the extreme right of the central group is known to be the portrait of Masaccio himself, done from a looking-glass. It resembles in form and feature the portrait of Masaccio given by Vasari, while the compact, well-knit frame and square head are suggestive of the young painter in all the power and strength he exhibits in his works. For the first time the effect of life is produced in the figures, which are raised from the flat surface by modelling the forms.

(2) The fresco of the *Resuscitation of the King's Son* in which this art is carried to a still greater perfection. The subject of this fresco is by some supposed to be Eutychus,[3] by others the apocryphal story of the challenge of Simon the Magician to the Apostles SS. Peter and Paul to restore to life a youth, who had been dead fourteen years, the kinsman of the Roman emperor.

The boy is represented in the picture kneeling before the apostles; by his side are the skull and bones to indicate his former state of death. A large crowd stand round beholding the miracle, and among the figures are contemporary portraits of Guicciardini, Luigi Pulci, Antonio Pollaiuolo, and others. The central group was afterwards finished by Filippino.

(3) *S. Peter baptizing.*—Among the figures in this fresco,

[1] As to the distribution of the remainder of the frescoes, see *Lives of Masolino and Filippino Lippi.*

[2] See S. Matthew xvii. 24—27.

[3] See Acts xx. 9.

that of the trembling proselyte, who appears actually to shake from cold as he stands on the brink of the water, has obtained a world-wide celebrity. Lanzi tells us that it formed an epoch in the history of art,[1] and was the centre of attraction to all who both at the time and afterwards studied these frescoes. Among these we might enumerate Filippino Lippi, who finished them, Verrocchio, Ghirlandajo, Sandro Botticelli, Perugino. Later on Michelangelo did not disdain to learn there the principles of the art which he carried to perfection. Raphael borrowed from them, and indeed found little to alter in Masaccio's treatment of the *Expulsion from Paradise*, when he painted the same subject in the Loggie at the Vatican.

Besides the frescoes of the Brancacci Chapel, Masaccio executed a work in S. Maria Novella, which was only discovered in 1857, having been hitherto concealed by a large picture by Vasari. This recent discovery, the undoubted work of Masaccio, has, by comparing it with the frescoes of the Brancacci Chapel, helped to determine which are Masaccio's productions. In itself it is a painting of great interest, showing how far Masaccio was guided by the Giotto type before he abandoned traditionary art for the study of nature. It has been truly said of him that with one hand he grasped Giotto, while the other was stretched out to Raphael. An early example of his style was the group of *S. Anna the Virgin and Infant Saviour*, originally painted for the Church of S. Ambrogio, and now in the Accademia delle Belle Arti in Florence.[2] There are also two pictures by him in the Uffizi Gallery, one supposed to be his own portrait (No. 286); the other, not so certainly known to be by Masaccio, represents a man the size of life (No. 1167).

Had Masaccio lived, he might have attained to still greater heights of fame; but his death was premature and sudden—some, indeed, ascribe it to poison; such was the jealousy of his

[1] Lanzi, *Storia Pittorica della Italia*, vol. i. p. 50.

[2] See Vasari, ed. 1878-9, p. 200.

extraordinary talent. All we know is, that when the next return was issued by the office of the Catasto, on Masaccio's tax paper appeared the vague words, "Dicesi è morta in Roma."

Masaccio's method of drawing was, we are told, excessively rapid; he chiefly directed his attention to representing the figures in action, neglecting the smaller details, which did not immediately tend to produce this effect. In his early studies of modelling, he learnt from Ghiberti and Donatello, not merely the knowledge of form, but the effects of light and shade, in giving roundness to his figures; to this he added an accuracy of drawing, a softness and harmony in colouring the flesh, which had never been reached before. His habit of painting from life (and it will be remembered how many portraits he introduced into his work) gave animation and character to each individual head, so that it was said of him that he painted not only the body but the soul.

"Fu molto semplice nell' paneggiare," the Italian biographer tells us; and it is a relief to turn from the stiff longitudinal folds of the Giotto school to the grand and simple treatment of drapery by Masaccio.

Sir Joshua Reynolds sums up his description in a few brief words: "He appeared to be the first who discovered the path that leads to every excellence to which the art afterwards arrived; and may therefore be justly considered one of the great fathers of modern art."[1]

List of Paintings by Masaccio.

1. The frescoes in the Church of S. Clemente at Rome.
2. The frescoes in the Brancacci Chapel in the Church of the Carmine at Florence, as enumerated on page 20.
3. The *Virgin and Child*, in the Accademia delle Belle Arti (No 36).

[1] Sir Joshua Reynolds, Discourse XII.

The other works by Masaccio, noticed by Vasari, no longer exist.[1]

Christ casting out a Devil; once in the house of Ridolfo Ghirlandajo.

S. Ivo of Britain; once on a pilaster in the Badia, Florence.

The *Nativity, between SS. Catherine and Julia, with Scenes from the Lives of these Saints;* in the predella, formerly in S. Maria Maggiore, Florence.

The pictures in the Carmine at Pisa.

Pictures ascribed to Masaccio, but not supposed to be genuine—

A life-size *Virgin enthroned with the Infant Saviour;* in the Chapel to the right of the choir in the Church of S. Giovanni.

A *Portrait of a Member of the Panichi Family;* exhibited under Masaccio's name in the Gallery of Modena.

The *Portrait* called that of *Masaccio*, by himself, in the National Gallery; by some assigned to Botticelli, by others to Filippino.

To the same class belong two portraits exhibited in the Manchester Exhibition (Nos. 66 and 67).

A head and two profiles at the Oxford University.

A *S. Lawrence* and an *Adoration of the Magi*, in the Liverpool Gallery.[2]

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878-9, pp. 290–292.

[2] See Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. i. pp. 548, 549.

CHAPTER III.

FRA ANGELICO. Born 1387. Died 1455.

"Ed in quel mezzo con le penne sparte
Vidi più di mille angeli festanti,
Ciascun distinto di fulgore e d' arte
Vidi quivi a' lor giuochi ed a' lor canti
Ridere una belleza, che letizia
Era negli occhi a tutti gli altri santi."

Paradiso, canto xxxi. line 131 *e seg.*

THE paintings of Masaccio have always been regarded as powerful illustrations of what is termed realistic art, because they were the first and nearly perfect results of the study of the human form, foreshortening, perspective, and all the science of art, the triumph of the great masters of the Renaissance.

Those of Fra Angelico have been chosen, on the other hand, as the last and best examples of the opposite school—the school of symbolic religious art.

In his treatment of sacred subjects—and no others were ever expressed by his pencil—he exhibits the devout religious feeling which he shared with Giotto and his pupils, and which gives to the work of these early Italian artists an enduring charm.

It is this special *character*, to use an artist's term, which enables them still to hold their place in art, in spite of their deficiencies in execution, nor can mere technical excellence

ever make up for its absence. With Fra Angelico it was the single aim of his life to give expression to this feeling in painting.

He was born, in 1387, at Vicchio, one of the fortified villages which crowned the summit of the Apennines, in the province of Mugello. Vicchio was but little removed from Vespignano, the birth-place of Giotto rather more than a century before.

We do not know much of his early years, except that his father's Christian name was Pietro (the surname remains unknown); that he was called Guido, or Guidolino, and that he had a brother two years younger than himself, afterwards called Fra Benedetto.

It is supposed that Fra Angelico must have made his first essay in art, in miniature painting and illumination, with which it was the custom among the different orders to embellish their monastic missals.

Some of the biographers affirm that Gherardo Starnina, the most brilliant colourist of the age, was his master; but this assertion is founded, not so much on fact, as upon a similarity of style between the two painters; others, on the contrary, declare that he was a pupil of Giottino.

We only know that at the age of twenty his gift for painting was fully recognised, and that he might easily have earned from it, as a layman, a competent livelihood.[1]

But he preferred to devote his life to the immediate service of God, and, in the prime of his youth and strength, he joined the Dominican Order. The chronicle of S. Domenico of Fiesole records the event in these terms:—

"1407. Brother Joannes Petri de Mugello of Vicchio, who excelled as a painter, and adorned many tables and walls in divers places, accepts the habit of a clerk in this convent . . . . and in the following year professed."

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878-9, vol ii. p. 505.

He entered upon this new life under the name of Fra Giovanni; that of Beato or Angelico was afterwards conferred upon him by universal consent on account of his blameless life and the inspired beauty of his paintings.

The Order of S. Dominic had already contributed some of the great art treasures of the world. In architecture they gave to Florence the Church of S. Maria Novella, "sposa," as it was fondly called by Michelangelo in the fervour of his admiration. Not only was this church planned by the Dominican architects, Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro, but their designs were executed by carpenters and masons also furnished by the convent. In sculpture, a Dominican, Fra Guglielmo Agnelli, had been employed by Niccolò Pisano to assist in the basreliefs of the famous tomb of S. Dominic. It remained for Fra Angelico—for by that name he is best known to the world—to prove by his numerous and beautiful paintings that his order might claim another distinction from that branch of the art.

From the time that he entered the Order of S. Dominic the life of Fra Angelico may be divided into several very distinct periods:

(1) His residence at Foligno and Cortona.

(2) His return to Fiesole; and his work at Florence.

(3) His work at Rome in the Vatican Chapel under Pope Nicholas V.

His Residence at Foligno and Cortona.

In 1409, the year after Fra Angelico and his brother had entered the convent at Fiesole, the affairs of the Church, already sufficiently troubled by two rival pontiffs, were still further complicated by the election of a third, Alexander V., by the Council of Pisa. The Archbishop of Florence declared for the new pope and persecuted the brotherhood of

S. Dominic for maintaining their allegiance to Gregory XII., at Fiesole, till they were forced to abandon their convent and take refuge at Foligno, in Umbria.[1]

Fra Angelico was thus by an accident removed from the influence of the Florentine school just as it was entering upon a new phase of development, in which devotion and religious feeling were no longer to be the first objects, but were to be supplanted by the eager desire for perfection of form.

This accidental change of abode no doubt preserved for him, intact, the devotional feeling of his pictures; more especially as this must have been still further deepened and strengthened by the influence of the Umbrian school, as exemplified in the works of Giotto and his pupils, which surrounded him when at Foligno. If the tomb of S. Dominic, by Niccolò Pisano, had already exercised its influence upon Florentine art, the resting-place of S. Francis at Assisi, when adorned by Giotto, was another witness to that spirit of wisdom and love combined which should guide the treatment of sacred subjects. It was as if the two great saints—of whom

> "L' un fu tutto serafico in ardore,
> L' altro per sapienza in terra fue
> Di cherubica luce uno splendore."
> *Par.* xi. 37-40—

had influence even from their graves to inspire the hand of the artist.

The lessons of the Umbrian school were supplemented by the study of the old paintings of Siena, whence Fra Angelico may have acquired that pure and perfect type which is never absent from his Madonnas. Some technical peculiarities in colouring would suggest the same influence.

The brotherhood remained at Foligno till 1413, when, driven thence by the plague, they removed to the convent of Cortona.

[1] Marchese, vol. i. doc. v. p. 397.

There appear to be no works extant of Fra Angelico bearing the exact date of his residence at Foligno, but it is probable that the picture executed in the Chapel of S. Niccolè dei Guidalotti for the Church of S. Domenico at Perugia belongs to this period. Originally oblong, divided into three compartments, in the form of a triptych with a gradino, it represents on a gold ground the *Blessed Virgin and Child;* on either side of the throne are angels carrying baskets of flowers. In the two compartments which serve as shutters for this picture the artist has painted *S. John the Baptist, S. Catherine, S. Dominic,* and *S. Nicholas.* The gradino is also divided into three compartments, representing the *Legend of S. Nicholas.*[1]

Although Fra Angelico, unlike most painters, scarcely changed his manner all through his career, this picture is placed in the category of his earlier works, because, in the arrangement of the figures and in the treatment of the drapery, it shows the unmistakable influence of the specimens of Giotto's school, with which he was at that time immediately surrounded. The same manner prevails in his paintings at Cortona, which are very numerous.

In the interior of the Church of S. Domenico, on the right of the high altar, is a picture representing the *Virgin Enthroned,* holding the Infant Saviour on her knee, between SS. John the Baptist and the Evangelist on the right, and SS. Mary Magdalene and Mark on the left.

The representation of the Virgin is one of the most beautiful ever executed by Fra Angelico. The Infant Saviour, standing on her knees, is covered in the lower part with a red drapery, and holds a rose in His hand; His face turned towards His Mother with a beautiful smile. The gradino, or pedestal, of this picture, ornamented with scenes from the

[1] The first two of these are at Rome, in the Museum of the Vatican; the third remains at Perugia, in the sacristy of the Convent of S. Domenico. Marchese, vol. i. note to p. 215.

life of S. Dominic,[1] has been removed to the Chiesa del Gesù, where it now is.

The same church contains another altar-piece representing the *Annunciation.* The Virgin is seated on a throne, her arms crossed on her breast; she bends her head to receive the tidings brought by the Angel Gabriel with golden hair and wings dazzling in their gold and varied colours. Both texts, the words of the angel and the Virgin's answer, are inscribed on the field of the picture, a remnant of the customs of the earlier Italian school.[2]

The subject of the Annunciation was always a favourite theme with Fra Angelico. We find it treated again in the churches of S. Maria Novella, and in the convent of S. Marco at Florence. That of S. Marco is considered the noblest, and may be taken as the type of all others. In the treatment of both figures Fra Angelico surpassed himself. The Virgin, representing the ideal of all that is pure and holy, is seated with the arms crossed on the breast, the garments, the conventional red with the blue mantle; her countenance expressive of holy repose; the fair hair falls loose on the shoulders. The figure of the angel is of marvellous beauty. Bending on one knee before her, the arms crossed, he seems to await with a smile of ineffable joy the reception of his tidings. From Dante, Fra Angelico must have borrowed the

[1] In six compartments:—1. In two parts, the *Dream of Pope Innocent III.*, who sees in his sleep S. Dominic supporting the tottering church. The *Embrace of SS. Dominic and Francis*, symbolic of the conquest of the world by science and love. 2. *S. Dominic in ecstasy before the Altar*—the Apostles SS. Peter and Paul appear to him. 3. *Dispute of S. Dominic with the Albigenses.* 4. The *Holy Patriarch raises to life the young Napoleon, nephew of Cardinal Stefano di Fossa-Nova.* 5. *S. Dominic and his Brothers receive from the Angels a Miraculous Repast of Bread.* 6. The *Death of S. Dominic.*

[2] There are very few of the pictures of Fra Angelico which have not some text or devout aspiration inscribed, either in the glories of the saints or in the folds of the garments.

AN ANGEL. IN THE UFFIZI, FLORENCE.

One of the twelve which adorn the "Madonna and Saints," painted by Fra Angelico for the Corporation of the Linaiuo in 1433

idea of rapt joy which appears in his face, and to Dante alone can we leave the description—

" Qual e quell' Angel, che con tanto gioco
Guarda negli occhi la nostra Regina
Innamorato sì che par di fuoco.

* * * *

Baldezza e leggiadria
Quanta esser puote in Angelo ed in alma
Tutto è in lui, e si volem che sia
Perchè egli è quegli che portò la palma
Giuso a Maria, Quando il Figluol di Dio
Carcar si volle della nostra salma."

Par. xxxii. 110.

Any one acquainted with Fra Angelico's paintings would admit that his genius most clearly shows itself in his painting of angels. The difficulty of clothing the blessed spirits with a body is manifest, and, perhaps, none of the Christian subjects have been more unworthily profaned by the Renaissance. The old school had been wont to paint the angels as they are described to us in the Bible. Sometimes they are represented as the Cherubim of the prophets, as we read in Isaiah:—

" Each one had six wings;
With twain he covered his face,
With twain he covered his feet,
With twain he did fly."—vi. 2.

In other places we read of the angels who appeared to Abraham, Jacob, and Tobias clad in the shape of youth. This type was always adopted by the school of Giotto, and, in spite of the long flowing robe, there was nothing feminine in their character.

Fra Angelico was a true pupil of the school in this respect, and if he sometimes made the angels younger in order to endow them with the freshness of the prime of youth, he never represented them as infants (like the school of Perugino), being of opinion that the age of childhood was not adapted

to express the zeal and intelligence which should belong to the messengers and ministers of the Most High.

The fresco executed by Fra Angelico in the façade of the Church of S. Domenico above the door does not belong to this period, but was probably painted later in life, on his way to Rome.[1] It represented the *Madonna with the Child* in her arms, holding a globe, SS. Dominic and Peter Martyr in adoration. The four Evangelists adorn the arch. These are in the best preservation, having been sheltered from the sun and rains of 400 years, which have damaged other parts of the fresco, although a certain brilliancy of colour and sweetness of touch still witnessed to the work of Fra Angelico till they perished when the convent was destroyed by the French.

While Fra Angelico was thus busily engaged in decorating the church at Cortona, the head of his order, Giovanni Dominici, profiting by the death of the anti-pope, Alexander V., obtained the sanction of Pope Gregory XII. to return to Fiesole. The brotherhood had, however, to re-purchase from the Bishop of Fiesole their right to inhabit the convent, forfeited, according to the foundation deed, by an absence of two months, and their exile had extended over nine years.

The bishop demanded an ecclesiastical vestment worth a hundred ducats, and then gave his consent to their return. The brotherhood were enabled to pay this considerable fee out of the paternal inheritance of S. Antoninus, one of the brothers, which fell to him at that time. Their funds were still further augmented by a legacy of six thousand florins bequeathed to them by a rich Florentine citizen.

This last increase of wealth was spent in enlarging the convent, so that Fra Angelico found an ample field for the exercise of talent now recognised by all his brethren. Some of his choicest works were executed in Fiesole. It seemed as if—turning away from the sad realities of life, ever before him in the city which lay at his feet, divided by

[1] Marchese, vol. i. p. 219.

faction, filled with evil customs and pagan doctrines—he took refuge in an ideal world, and created out of his own imagination the saints who were to people it, in his numerous paintings. During the eighteen years he was at Fiesole, he worked incessantly. For the convent he executed two paintings in fresco, one in the refectory; the other—a *Crucifixion*[1] —in the chapter-room. These are still extant.

The three pictures which he painted for the Conventual Church were an altar-piece, which—originally a fine painting —has been so badly restored by Francesco Mariani that but little remains of the original colour: an *Annunciation*, and the *Coronation of the Virgin*, now in the Louvre, and which we select for description as the best example of his style at the period.[2]

"It represents a throne under a Gothic canopy, to which there is an ascent by nine steps. The Virgin kneels on the topmost step, clothed in a red tunic with a blue robe thrown over it; a royal mantle with a rich border falls from it. The features are delicate, the expression full of humility and adoration.

"The Saviour seated on the throne bends forward and is in the act of placing the crown on her head. On each side are twelve angels playing on various musical instruments; on the lower grade again on either side are forty personages of the Old and New Testament. Several saints are kneeling before the throne—S. Catherine with her wheel, S. Agnes with her lamb, S. Cecilia crowned with flowers.

"A row of seven small pictures form the predella; beneath

[1] This last has been removed since September 1879. An eye-witness describes the process of removal thus:—"The brick wall was cut with a saw all round the picture, the wall having been previously lined with a wooden support and framework; it was then lowered gradually and removed." It is now in the Louvre.

[2] It was purchased by the French Government in 1812, and is now in the long gallery of the Louvre.

the principal picture are represented various incidents in the life of S. Dominic. The whole is about 7½ feet high by 6 feet in width. It is painted in distemper, the glories round the head are in gold, the colours are the most delicate and vivid imaginable, and the ample draperies have the long folds, which recall the school of Giotto; the gaiety and harmony of the tints, the expression of the various heads, the divine rapture of the angels, with their air of immortal youth, the devout reverence of the other personages, the unspeakable serenity and beauty of the whole composition render this picture worthy of the celebrity it has enjoyed for more than four centuries." [1]

Vasari praises this picture as an example not only of the high quality of Fra Angelico's mechanical power, but also of the profound intelligence which guided him in the composition and the arrangement of the figures.

Besides these he painted many pictures for the other churches in Fiesole, and sent many to Florence. Several of these have now found their way into the Accademia delle Belle Arti.

Among them is the *Life of Christ* in thirty-five small pictures. This series of paintings has always been reckoned among the best of his small panel pictures. They once formed the panels of a press intended for the treasures of the chapel of the S. Annunziata at Florence. To those who are at pains to examine them they will show that Fra Angelico was a theologian of no mean capacity, and perhaps his superiority in this respect to the artists who preceded him may have been one cause of his successful treatment of sacred subjects. Nowhere do such proofs appear of this as in these paintings of the Life of our Lord.

His mind is imbued with the type and prophecies of the Old Testament, and their fulfilment in every line of the New Testament.

[1] Mrs. Jameson's *Early Italian Painters*, p. 76.

We find an illustration of this in the double texts affixed to each picture. He was also conversant with the commentaries of the Fathers upon them, and with all the sciences of the Middle Ages.

It would take pages to describe the details and execution of these pictures, the thought and knowledge which suggested the ideas, the pains and care spent in expressing them. The Life of our Lord was closed by two compositions, the sum and conclusion of that Life. The Law of Love, the gift of the Gospel to the world, and the Last Judgment. Again we find the remembrance of Old and New Testament, in the double texts; the Prophets of the Old and the Apostles of the New Testament, standing on either side of the Cross in the centre of the picture, repeat the twelve articles inscribed on the banner, and each in turn presents his scroll with the text and answering text. The same mystical treatment is carried throughout the work.

The Last Judgment was a very favourite subject with mediæval artists. Sculptors would often place it on the doors of cathedrals as the entrance to Heaven.

The school of Giotto was well calculated to render aptly a subject whose mysteries are foreshadowed in the *Divina Commedia*. Orcagna had already dealt with it in the church of S. Maria Novella and in the Campo Santo. Fra Angelico was not unlike the earlier Florentine in his method, and grave, elegant style; only his greater genius developed and idealised further the forms and types which Orcagna had employed.

He painted the subject five times: the oldest is the one to which we have just alluded; it is inferior to the later ones but still full of beauty. Few could rival Fra Angelico in the gravity of his attitudes, the truthfulness of his expression, and religious character of his work.

Another *Last Judgment*, that in the Accademia at Florence, is more complete. Montalembert has described it in most

beautiful language,[1] which we will not mar by curtailing; we cannot reproduce it at length.

Another *Last Judgment* formed part of the Gallery of Cardinal Fesch, and is now in that of Earl Dudley at Dudley House, the composition the same, but the execution superior.

The fourth exists in the Corsini Gallery at Rome. It is not so extensive a composition, and is more like a miniature.

A fifth is in the Museum at Berlin, but it is a repetition or copy of the one at Florence.

The original design in pen and ink of another *Last Judgment* is preserved in the Gallery of the Uffizi, among the collections of old masters made by Andrea Tafi in the thirteenth century. There is also a study for the same subject in M. de Reiset's collection at Paris, executed in bistre. It represents Christ as Judge, and the three angels accompanying him recall the picture in the Corsini Gallery.

"At the top, is a hand drawn from life, and given with the precision and liveliness admired in the hands of Holbein's portraits. On the reverse of the sheet, on a yellow ground, is a fine head of a 'religious' seen in front, half in the light and half in the shade; and this portrait presents a surprising character of truth. The smallest details are represented in it with the fidelity of daguerreotype; a little swelling over the left eye is given carefully. A painter of the Renaissance could not have drawn it with greater breadth and skill."[2]

The same collection contains a study probably executed in Fra Angelico's youth when in Umbria—painted on coloured paper set off in white, representing a S. Francis in glory. Besides these there are studies for his latest works—the Evangelists SS. Matthew and Mark—painted on the arch of the chapel of the Vatican. The former, washed and set off in

[1] *Du Vandalisme et du Catholicisme*, p. 79.

[2] See Cartier, *Life of Fra Angelico*, English edition, 1865, p. 53.

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI. IN THE UFFIZI, FLORENCE.

Part of the predella of the "Madonna and Saints," painted by Fra Angelico for the Corporation of the Linaiuoli in 1433.

white and green ground, holds with both hands a book opened on his right knee; the latter has a pen in his right hand and a closed book in the left. These last three studies are very beautifully finished.

To return to the Gallery of Fine Arts at Florence, which contains many other of Fra Angelico's pictures, we find among the most remarkable :—

(1) *The Descent from the Cross.* It was in the Church of Santa Trinita, and is executed with so much care that it may be reckoned among the best works he ever did. It is framed, like a jewel in its setting, with little pictures, twenty in number. As a sequel to this "Descent from the Cross" and apparently of the same period, we find—

(2) *The Entombment.* Painted for the Confraternity of S. Croce del Tempio : also a picture in two parts, below—

(3) *The Adoration of the Magi;* above, *A Pieta.* The fragments of the Legend of SS. Cosmo and Damian, which were originally painted for the Pharmacy of S. Marco, and which are now separated and are hung in the Pinacoteca at Munich.

In the Uffizi there are also several panel pictures by Angelico, and also a magnificent altar-piece, painted for the Guild[1] of Flax-workers, one of the well-known guilds of the Italian Republic, about 1433.

This picture was to be painted, according to the contract, within and without, alluding to the doors of the triptych, with brilliant and varied colours, and gold and silver of the purest and finest that could be procured, with the artist's best workmanship, for which he is to receive one hundred and ninety golden florins, and more or less according as the painter should think fit, and according to the number of the figures. And here we must notice that Fra Angelico never painted for money,

[1] The original document of this commission being still preserved, bears witness to the name of Guido having been the "*primitiva noma*" of Fra Angelico before he entered the Dominican Order. Marchese, vol. i. p. 225.

but the sums for which his paintings were purchased became a considerable source of income to his convent.

The painter faithfully fulfilled his contract. The picture, which is constantly copied by artists to this day, represents the Madonna (life-size) enthroned, holding the Infant Jesus, with twelve angels in the cornice of such great beauty, that, according to Vasari, they seemed to have been rained down from heaven ("*piovuii dal cielo*").

We will only mention one other picture, an altar-piece for the church of S. Domenico at Fiesole, of which we now possess the predella[1] in our National Gallery[2] (No. 663). The Saviour "with the Banner of the Resurrection in his left hand, in the midst of a choir of Angels, some blowing trumpets, others playing various musical instruments. On the two sides are kneeling a great crowd of the Blessed . . . . Altogether two hundred and thirty-six figures or portions of figures; many with their names attached."

Residence at Florence.

We now reach the next period of Angelico's life, that of his residence in Florence, the time when he was brought face to face with the Renaissance.

Brunelleschi was erecting the Cupola at S. Maria dei Fiori—Ghiberti was finishing the gates of the Baptistery—Masaccio had indeed disappeared from Florence, but his frescoes were scarcely dry upon the walls of the Brancacci Chapel. Donatello was the great sculptor of the day.[3] Fra Angelico profited

[1] Predella or *Gradino*, a *step* which raised the picture quite above the foot of the candlesticks on the altar, and was ornamented with pious subjects, calculated to excite the devotion of the priest.

[2] We possess also one other specimen of Fra Angelico's work in the great National Collection, purchased in 1857—*The Wise Men's Offering* (No. 582)—once in the collection of Professor Rosini, at Pisa.

[3] Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. i. p. 575.

by their fellowship; in his architectural backgrounds he showed he understood and appreciated Brunelleschi, and his figures improved after his study of those in the Brancacci Chapel, while they lost none of their religious and devout character.

The brotherhood were removed from their convent at Fiesole to that of S. Marco, by the powerful influence of Cosimo de' Medici.

While at his country house at Fiesole this prince and patron of the arts had already been the benefactor of the Fiesole convent. He had ordered many pictures from Fra Angelico, and now on his return from exile to Florence he determined that the brotherhood should accompany him there. Through his influence with the Pope he caused the monks of the order of S. Sylvester, who had long scandalised Florence by their evil lives, to be ejected from their convent of S. Marco, which was then given to the Dominicans of Fiesole. S. Marco was at that time a miserable half-ruined building; Cosimo caused it to be rebuilt by the famous architect Michelozzo Michelozzi. It was begun in 1437, and after six years' labour it was completed, at the cost of 36,000 florins. The restorations of the church were finished in 1441, and it was consecrated in that year by Pope Eugenius IV. The princely Cosimo further endowed it with a library, purchasing for that purpose the world-famed collection of MSS. belonging to Niccolo Niccoli, and thus organised the first public library in Italy. He also presented the choir-books, at a cost of 1,500 ducats, intrusting their illumination to Fra Benedetto, the brother of Fra Angelico. Meanwhile Fra Angelico himself was already at work upon the altar-piece for the choir, which represented the *Virgin enthroned with the Infant Saviour*, adorned by the kneeling figures of SS. Cosmo and Damian; these two saints he chose for representation as a tribute of gratitude to the patron who had been so lavishing in his gifts.

The pedestal of the altar-piece representing the lives of these two saints has long been parted from the altar-piece, now in the Accademia; and has been scattered over various galleries. Many duplicates also exist of the same subject, as it was frequently treated by Fra Angelico.

As soon as the altar-piece was completed, Fra Angelico began his celebrated frescoes, upon which so much of his fame rests. They were painted upon the walls of the first cloister called "primo di S. Antonino," and the cells connected with it. The first painting was that of *Christ upon the Cross.* It occupies the principal wall of this first cloister, at the end of the side running along the church, and facing the entrance door.

In this figure of our Saviour, Fra Angelico gave the most perfect expression to the great Ideal which he had before him. We believe that Fra Angelico only attained to the representation of this supreme type of Christian art by the careful study of tradition.[1] He was guided by the light of those who went before him, whilst increasing it, and endowing it with his own colouring. By examining his works, it is easy to see that he has consulted the two great schools, Greek and Latin, as to his treatment of this subject. His types of our Saviour show a remarkable difference; his heart seems never to have been satisfied in its passionate yearning for the perfection of face and form which belonged to One who was "fairer than the children of men."

Sometimes he follows the type of Giotto, and gives our Saviour the power and strength of full manhood; sometimes, on the contrary, his types are extremely youthful, and his representation is that of the Tender Lamb who redeemed the world.

In the picture we are now considering, the representation of Christ is inferior to that of Giotto in force, but is so

[1] See Didron, *Histoire de Dieu*, p. 229. Quoted in Kugler's *Handbook of Painting*, vol. i. p. 9. See also Cartier's *Life of Fra Angelico*, p. 84.

sublime in its resignation, as to suggest the words of our first Good Friday Collect, that He was indeed "*contented* to suffer death upon the Cross." Perhaps, also, Dante's description of the Veronica at Rome, may have been before Fra Angelico's mind:—

> "Signor mio Gesù Cristo, Dio verace
> Or fu sì fatta la sembianza vostra?"
> *Par.* xxxi. line 106.

And if the expression is so wonderfully rendered as to give a faint suggestion of the Divine nature to our feeble imaginations, the representation of the human form far surpasses any of Fra Angelico's previous works; the drawing of the figure being pronounced by able and careful critics to be truly and exactly rendered.[1]

The figure of S. Dominic is considered to be no less excellent. He kneels at the foot of the Cross with an expression of such intensity of passion, and so marked an individuality, that it is supposed to have been a portrait of one of the brotherhood. Perhaps, that of S. Antoninus the Prior, an intimate friend of Fra Angelico; perhaps Fra Benedetto; perhaps even the artist himself.

Near this painting, and above the door leading to the sacristy, is the next work of Fra Angelico, a fresco of *S. Peter Martyr*, painted in the ogive.

In the left hand he holds a book and palm, and the forefinger of the right hand placed on his mouth enjoins silence. *S. Dominic with the discipline of his Order*, occupies the space above the door of the chapter-room.

The decoration of the cloisters is completed by a figure of *S. Thomas Aquinas*, and two more, scenes from the life of our Lord, one a *Resurrection*, painted near the door leading to the refectory, in which the figure of the Saviour is again

[1] See Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. i. p. 578.

most beautifully rendered; the other painted over the door of the hospice, where strangers were entertained, in which Fra Angelico represents *Two Dominican brothers receiving the Lord as a pilgrim.* The heads of the two brothers are full of expression, and Fra Bartolommeo must have been inspired by the same idea when he painted the *Disciples at Emmaus* above the door of the refectory.

Another of Fra Angelico's masterpieces is at the farther end of the chapter-room. It is a repetition of the painting in the cloister, only with the addition of all the incidents of the Crucifixion, and it represents the whole scene on Calvary. The Cross of the Lord is very high, betwixt the two thieves. At his feet a death's head marks the consequence of sin. Around him are the witnesses of His Passion. The Blessed Virgin, sinking under the weight of her griefs, is supported by a holy woman. Mary Magdalen, kneeling at the foot of the Cross, turns without rising to receive the Virgin in her arms, and they form a very beautiful group. On one side are S. John the Baptist, S. Mark, historian of the Passion, and Protector of the Convent, S. Lawrence, SS. Cosmo and Damian, patrons of the Medici.

On the opposite side are introduced the figures of various other saints. The whole composition is framed in a broad and rich border divided by medallions which frame the heads of the prophets. In their hands they holds banderols, on which are written texts taken from the prophets.

The glories of the order of S. Dominic are represented in the lower border. Among all the figures of this vast composition, two only are badly represented, that of the unrepentant thief—it was always an impossibility with Fra Angelico to depict crime—and that of S. Mark; which is accounted for by it having been possibly painted by Fra Benedetto instead of by his brother. Otherwise the execution is simple and free, the colouring soft and light, with the exception of the background, which is in a deplorable condition,

having been since re-painted, with a dull red and a cold grey. No one knows who was guilty of this destructive act.

From the Chronicle of S. Marco, we learn that there was another fresco by Fra Angelico in the refectory, representing a Crucifixion, but that it was destroyed in 1534.

Of all Fra Angelico's works, there are none which give us a better clue to the mind of the artist, none which give greater evidence of the humility of his character than the frescoes which adorn the bare walls of the cells of his convent. Narrow, low, lighted by little arched windows, with just enough space for a table, chair, and bed, these rude chambers contain some of Fra Angelico's best work, which, unknown till the middle of this century, has for four hundred years borne silent witness to his desire to promote the glory of God, and his total indifference to the praise of men.[1]

The inexhaustible and favourite theme of this pious painter was the life of the Lord, and, as it has been well expressed, we find in each picture, material for a page of meditation upon it.[2] The figures are middle-sized, the original colouring—if we except the background, which has been occasionally retouched—is in Fra Angelico's sweetest and purest manner. On the outer wall of the range of cells, the series begins with the *Annunciation*, to which we have already alluded as the finest specimen of Fra Angelico's treatment of this subject. It is again repeated inside one of the cells. The *Nativity* was also a replica of that painted for the S. Annunziata, now in the Accademia delle Belle Arti. *The Presentation in the Temple* bears great resemblance to that of Giotto, also in the Accademia; but here, unhappily, the background has been painted over with a heavy, ugly tint, to the great damage of the general effect. *The Adoration of the Magi* is a masterpiece, bearing the evidence of Fra Angelico's recent studies among the Renaissance artists, and worthy to

[1] Since 1867 the convent has been transformed into the Museo Florentino di S. Marco.

[2] Cartier, *Life of Fra Angelico*, Eng. ed., p. 213.

hold its place by them. It is painted in a cell much larger than the others, the one set apart by Cosimo de' Medici for his own use when he visited S. Antoninus, the prior of the convent, and Fra Angelico. It also received Pope Eugenius IV., when he consecrated the Church of S. Marco, on the Feast of the Epiphany, 1442. The subject of the picture was no doubt chosen with reference to this event.

The Baptism of our Saviour, The Sermon on the Mount, The Transfiguration—truer, and more divine in its type of the Saviour, though not so bold as that of Raphael—*The Institution of the Sacrament, The Agony in the Garden, The Betrayal of Judas, The Lord in the Prætorium, The Ascent of Calvary, The Crucifixion*, are all treated in turn with the inexhaustible tenderness of feeling, the unwearied devotion which were the inseparable companions of Fra Angelico's labours.

The three last paintings of the series, *The Holy Women at the Tomb, The Descent into Limbo*, and *The Coronation of the Virgin*, have been selected as the most remarkable—after *The Adoration of the Magi*—of this series. In the *Descent into Limbo*, Christ, as Conqueror, enters through the gate, which has fallen flat at His approach, beneath it Lucifer lies crushed, the impersonation of death and sin.

The Saviour stretches forth His hand to Abraham, the father of the faithful, foremost among the vast multitude of "spirits in prison," who have so long awaited His coming. Among these we recognise Adam and Eve.

The Italian critics look upon it as a marvellous rendering of the well-known passage in the *Inferno*—

> "Vidi venire un Possente
> Con segno di Vittoria incoronato,
> Trasseci l'ombra del Primo Parente.
> D'Abel suo Figlio, quella di Noe,
> Di Moisè legista e l'ubbidiente
> Abraam Patriarca e David Re;
> * * * *
> Ed altri molti e fecegli beati."—(*Inf.* c.iv. 54,et seq.)

If, in *The Descent into Limbo*, Fra Angelico gives expression to Dante's lines, it is the same poet's conception by which he is guided in the grouping of the saints, who are contemplating the *Coronation of the Virgin;* disposing them as if they constituted one of those garlands of blessed spirits who incessantly sing and dance round the Eternal Throne. The principal figures are more celestial in their rendering in this fresco than in the picture which treats of the same subject, now in the Gallery of the Uffizi. The Virgin is seated on a white cloud, overarched by a rainbow. She is robed in white, her arms are folded on her bosom, a gentle smile is on her lips, as she leans forward to receive the crown from the Saviour seated by her side. Her whole attitude is one of deep humility in the midst of all the surrounding glory.

The figure of the Saviour is also robed in white, shaded with a light and delicate tone of colour, and in the drapery of the two figures Fra Angelico surpasses himself.

The last painting, one of the most perfect as a composition, in the Convent of S. Marco is upon the wall of the upper dormitory, and represents the *Madonna* surrounded with the patron saints of the convent and order.

Besides the paintings which have been specially selected as types of the whole series, there are eighteen smaller pictures in the cells on the right-hand side of the second dormitory; but of these, some have perished from damp, and some have been still more effectually ruined by the attempt to repair them.

Fra Angelico at Rome. 1445—1455.

The last ten years of Fra Angelico's life were to be spent at Rome, and some of his best work belongs to this period. He was at that time between fifty and sixty, and it is a fact recently brought before our notice,[1] that many of the great artists during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, produced

[1] Burckhardt's *Cicerone* for Italy, ed. 1879, p. 55.

their greatest *chefs-d'œuvre* comparatively late in life. Titian and Michelangelo, Leonardo, when he painted his *Cenacolo* at Milan, and Bellini, the most astonishing of all, who painted some of his finest pictures when he had passed his eighty-eighth year! Nor is it difficult to imagine that with such artists as these, and with all the great artists who have since followed in their steps, every year of experience would only add to the practised cunning of the hand so long as it retained its power, and develop in the eye's undimmed gaze an ever-increasing capacity for seeing with the understanding as well as the sight.

Vasari tells us that Pope Nicholas V. invited Fra Angelico to Rome; but in this he is proved to be inaccurate (and is corrected in the new Commentary). It is true that Fra Angelico was afterwards employed by him;[1] but it was from Eugenius IV., the predecessor of Nicholas V. in the Pontifical chair, that the first summons came. He consecrated the Church of S. Marco in 1442: the cell which he occupied on that occasion had been adorned by Fra Angelico: it was, therefore, no wonder that he should invite to Rome one who had already achieved so much in art.

Fra Angelico painted for him the Cappella del Sacramento, with scenes from the *Life of Christ*, but the chapel was afterwards demolished by Paul III. It was while engaged upon this work that the Archbishopric of Florence fell vacant; the Pope offered it to Fra Angelico, who, shrinking from an honour of which, in his modesty, he felt himself unworthy, recommended in his stead S. Antoninus, who was afterwards appointed to the vacant see.

Pope Eugenius died shortly after Fra Angelico's arrival in Rome, at the beginning of the year 1445. During the interval which elapsed before his successor Nicholas V. was firmly established in the Papal Chair, Fra Angelico painted some of his best frescoes in the Cathedral of Orvieto. He

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878-9, vol. ii. p. 528.

was engaged by the Chapter in conclave assembled, to paint the *Last Judgment* in the Cappella Nuova with figures the size of life.[1]

They conferred upon him the title of Maestro de' Maestri; he was to work there during the months of June, July, and August, at the rate of 200 golden ducats a year. Fra Angelico fulfilled his engagement as to time, and with the help of his pupil Benozzo Gozzoli, was able to accomplish the decoration of three triangular divisions in the ceiling. In these, he represented :—

1. The *Saviour* surrounded by a glory of Angels, in the act of giving judgment. The attitude is supposed to have been afterwards copied by Michelangelo.

2. Sixteen figures of *Saints and Apostles* seated in the clouds.

3. The *Virgin amongst the Apostles.*

He was obliged to leave the work unfinished, being summoned back to Rome by Nicholas V. There he decorated the Chapel of the Vatican which bears the name of the Pontiff.[2] It is curious that for two centuries the key of the

[1] Their deliberations (May 11th, 1447), still preserved in the archives of the Cathedral, were thus worded: "Considering that the chapel facing the one of the Corporal is blank . . . . it would be fitting to have it painted by some good and famous master-painter. At this moment there is at Orvieto a religious of the observance of S. Dominic, who has painted, and is painting, the chapel of our most holy Father in the Palace of the Vatican, who might perhaps be persuaded to come and paint the chapel; *he is the most famous of all the painters of Italy*, and would paint in the church only three months in the year, that is, in June, July, and August, because during the other months he is obliged to serve the Holy Father; but in these three months he will not remain in Rome. He asks a salary for himself at the rate of 200 ducats of gold a year, with the expenses of food, and colours, scaffolding, &c. And this master-painter is named Fra Giovanni."—*Life of Fra Angelico*, by E. Cartier, p. 256.

[2] The following notes are taken from documents, or registers, of the Camera Apostolica relative to Fra Angelico's works in Rome:—

"1447 9 May. To Pietro Giacomo, who worked with Fra Giovanni,

chapel should have been lost, and thus the treasures which it contained were unknown to the general world.

The frescoes illustrate scenes from the *Life of SS. Stephen and Lawrence.* The history of S. Stephen is painted in the arches of the upper part, that of S. Lawrence below. On the pilasters on each side of the lower course of frescoes, Fra Angelico painted saints erect in niches. SS. Anastasius, Leo, Thomas Aquinas, Ambrose, Buonaventura, Augustine, John, Chrysostom, and Pope Gregory the Great. In the ceiling which he painted azure spangled with stars, he represented in the four compartments in which it was divided, the four Evangelists with their symbols. The whole series show the result of Fra Angelico's studies in the Brancacci chapel, and that while he had not lost any of his original qualities, he had acquired new ones. Still preserving the purity, and devotional feeling of his drawing, and the transparency of his colouring, he added to these, more science in the lines, more vigorous tones, greater mastery over the arrangement of his figures, more powerful effects of light and shade. From a distance they succeed in giving the effect of the bold touch of Masaccio; when looked at closely, they have the finish of an exquisite miniature.[1] Vasari mentions other pictures by Fra Angelico in Rome; a *Crucifixion,* in the

for working in the chapel at S. Peter's, 3 florins, 15 bolognese—salary for 1 month and 18 days from 18th March to 2nd of May.

"1447, 23 May. To Fra Giovanni di Pietro, painter of the chapel of S. Peter's, to the 23rd day of May 40 ducats, 27 bolognese, on account of the annual 200 ducats from 13th March to last of May proximo, 43 florins, 27 bolognese.

"1447, 1 June. To Fra Giovanni, who paints in the chapel of S. Pietro, to the said day, 2 florins, 39 bolognese for expenses in the work of that chapel.

"1449. Ducats 182, bolognese 62, denari 8, for the painting of the studio (di N.-S.), Nostro Signore (?), the Pope (?). For the salary of Fra Giovanni, of Fiesole, and his workmen and other things." (This was probably the cabinet of Nicholas V.)

[1] Marchese, vol. i. pp. 293—4.

ST. LAWRENCE GIVING ALMS. BY FRA ANGELICO.

In the Chapel of Nicholas V. in the Vatican, Rome.

Vatican, and an *Annunciation* in Sta. Maria sopra Minerva; but these are no longer to be seen. We know, however, for certain, that two of his *Last Judgments*, those in the Corsini, and Dudley galleries, were executed at this time; also two pictures which have now been removed to Naples, and are in the Bourbon Museum there.[1] One (296) is an *Assumption of the Virgin*, the other *Our Lady ad Nives*, representing the legend of the foundation of S. Maria Maggiore in Rome. The earth is covered with snow, and while the Pope Liberius traces the foundation of the new Church, our Lord and the Holy Virgin appear in the sky.

It is not known why Fra Angelico never returned to finish his work at Orvieto, but it is recorded as a fact that to the last the Chapter of the cathedral waited in the hope of his return. Many painters desired to finish the work, but they never received permission to do so till the tidings reached Orvieto that Fra Angelico was dead.

He died in Rome, at the age of sixty-eight, March 18, 1455, and was buried in Santa Maria sopra Minerva; Pope Nicholas V. himself wrote the epitaph, which, while it recognises the marvellous talents of the painter, still gives his virtues the first place:[2]

Hic jacet ven. pictor.
Fr. Io. de Flor. Ordˢ. P̄dicato. ILLV.
M.
C. C. C. C.
L.
V.
Non mihi sit laudi, quod eram velut alter Apelles,
Sed quod lucra tuis omnia, Christe, dabam.
Altera nam terris opera exstant, altera coelo;
Urbs me Joannem flos tulit Etruriæ.

Though no artist's life was, as a whole, more equal than that of Fra Angelico, we can yet trace the different influences

[1] Nos. 296, 298. [2] Vasari, ed. 1878–9, p. 532.

which divided it into the three distinct epochs to which we have alluded. The first epoch was that of the Umbrian School, during his exile from Fiesole, which fostered the simplicity and purity of his soul, and gave to his youthful compositions great tenderness of feeling, and an inimitable freshness of expression. Of these, the masterpiece is the *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Louvre.

The second epoch, that of his full manhood, is best represented by the frescoes of S. Marco. He corrected the defects of his youth, a want of life and pliancy in his figures, and a too great love of ornament in the details. While still preserving the devotional spirit of his works, he gathered fresh power from studying the paintings of his great contemporaries in Florence.

In the third epoch, that spent at Rome, the fruit of these studies is still more apparent, in an increased vigour of drawing, a grandeur of style, and a marked improvement in his architectural distances.

Some critics have indeed pronounced these later works of Fra Angelico to be superior to those of Masaccio in the harmony of his lines in composition, while his colouring only appears inferior to that of Giotto and Masaccio, because his light and shade were not sufficiently defined, and because he was unacquainted with the mysteries of chiaroscuro. Perhaps the best clue to Fra Angelico's paintings is to be found in his character, which Vasari describes with simple eloquence.

"Fra Giovanni," he tells us, "was a man of simple and blameless life. He shunned the world, with all its temptations, and during his pure and simple life was such a friend to the poor that I think his soul must now be in heaven. He painted incessantly, but would never represent any other than a sacred subject. He might have been rich, but he scorned it, saying that true riches consisted in being content to be poor. He might have been placed in a position of power and authority, but he declined on the ground that

it was easier to obey than to command; that the temptation was less. He might have enjoyed dignities both within and without his convent, but he refused, declaring that his life had but one end in view, to flee from the evils of hell, and to approach the joys of heaven. . . . Humane and sober, he lived a chaste life, avoiding the snares of the world, and he was wont to say that the pursuit of art required rest, and a life of holy thoughts; that he who illustrates the acts of Christ should be with Christ. He was never known to indulge in anger against his brethren—a great point, and in my opinion, all but unattainable—and he never admonished but with a smile. With incredible kindness he would tell those who sought his works that, if they could arrange with the prior, he would not fail them. In fact, this father, whom no one can too much praise, was in all his dealings and intercourse modest and humble, and in his works simple and pious. The saints whom he depicted had more the air and semblance of saints than any produced by others. He never retouched or altered anything he had once finished, but left it as it was, believing it to be the will of God, that it should be so. Some go so far as to say that Fra Giovanni never touched a brush without first humbling himself in prayer. He never represented the crucified Saviour without having his cheeks bathed in tears; and hence one may judge from the features and attitudes of his figures the perfection of his grand and sincere belief in the Christian faith." [1]

Here we find the secret of the beauty, sweetness, and truth which prevail in his paintings. With the single aim before him of giving back to the service of heaven talents which were heaven-born, no worldly distractions had power to disturb the untroubled peace of his soul. Secluded in this holy calm, the cares and passions of human life were unknown to him, hence his inability to deal with their representation in painting; hence the lack of power and strength,

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878-9, vol. ii. p. 520.

and the incapacity for representing evil, which appears in his treatment of the unrepentant thief upon the cross, of the wicked in his oft-repeated pictures of the *Last Judgment*. In the joys of Paradise he found a more fitting theme for his gentle, loving pencil; he peopled the blessed regions with saints and angels of unearthly beauty; he adorned them with the fairest flowers and colours, whose never-fading brightness have borne witness for more than four hundred years to the truth of that "Life of the world to come," which throughout his earthly career was the abiding conviction of the artist's soul.

A LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL WORKS OF FRA ANGELICO.[1]

ANTWERP. MUSEUM.

S. Romualdo reproaching Otho III. with the murder of Crescentius.[2]

BERLIN. MUSEUM.

Madonna Enthroned with Child, with S. Dominic and S. Peter Martyr.

S. Dominic and S. Francis.

Glorification of S. Francis.

CORTONA. SAN DOMENICO.

Virgin and Child with S. Dominic and S. Peter (*lunette*).

Four Evangelists (*fresco, much damaged*).

Virgin and Child with Saints (*altar-piece*) *a*.

BAPTISTERY (*formerly the Jesuit Church*).

Annunciation, with scenes from the Life of the Virgin on the predella (*from San Domenico, Cortona*).

Predella, with scenes from the Life of S. Dominic (*predella to altar-piece in San Domenico, Cortona a*).

[1] Compiled from Crowe and Cavalcaselle's *History of Painting in Italy*, Burckhardt's *Cicerone—an Art Guide to Painting in Italy* (1879), and the official catalogues of those galleries which contain works by Fra Angelico.

[2] In Crowe and Cavalcaselle it is miscalled "S. Ambrose refusing the Entrance of the Temple to Theodosius." See Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. i. p. 588.

FLORENCE. Accademia delle Belle Arti.

Descent from the Cross (*from Santa Trinità, Florence*).

The Virgin and Child with Saints; and, on the predella, a Pietà and Six Saints (*from the Convent del Bosco a Frati di Mugello*).

The Virgin and Child with Saints.

The Virgin and Child with Saints (*from the Monastery of Annalena, Florence*).

S. Cosmo and S. Damian replacing a leg cut off a sick Man with that of a Negro (*part of a predella*).

Eighteen scenes from the Life of Christ, β (*from the Convent of the SS. Annunziata—originally panels to ornament the plate cupboards. "The Last Supper, The Baptism, and Transfiguration, are not by Fra Angelico."—Crowe and Cavalcaselle*).

The History of Five Martyrs.

Predella, with six scenes from the lives of S. Cosmo and S. Damian (*from the Chapel of S. Luke, in the cloister of the SS. Annunziata, Florence*).

Seventeen scenes from the Life of Christ (*from the Convent of the SS. Annunziata*). *Same series as* β.

Coronation of the Virgin.

Crucifixion.

A Pietà, and The Adoration of the Magi. ("*Possibly by a pupil.*"—*Crowe and Cavalcaselle.*)

Entombment (*formerly in the Monastery della Croce al Tempio*).

Last Judgment (*formerly in the Monastery degli Angeli, Florence*).

Uffizi.

Virgin and Child with Saints (*painted in* 1433 *for the Corporation of the Linaiuoli*) γ.

Birth of John the Baptist (*part of predella of* δ).

Marriage of the Virgin (*part of predella of* δ).

Death of the Virgin (*part of predella of* δ).

The Coronation of the Virgin, δ (*from S. Maria Nuova, Florence*).

Predella of γ. The Preaching of S. Peter; Adoration of the Magi; Martyrdom of S. Mark.

S. Matteo. *In the Hospital—*

The Virgin and Child adored by Four Angels.

Convent of San Marco (*now the Museo Fiorentino di San Marco*).

In the Cloisters—

The Crucifixion, with S. Dominic.

S. Peter Martyr enjoining silence.

FLORENCE. Convent of San Marco (*continued*).

S. Dominic with the scourge of nine thongs.
Christ coming from the Sepulchre.
S. Thomas Aquinas.
Christ as a Pilgrim welcomed by two Dominican Monks.
Christ with the Woundprints.

In the Chapter House—

Crucifixion. Christ between the thieves, surrounded by a group of twenty Saints, and below — bust portraits of seventeen Dominicans.

On the Upper Floor—

Annunciation.
Christ on the Cross, with S. Dominic.
Enthroned Madonna and Saints.

In the Cells—

Coronation of the Virgin.
The Maries at the Sepulchre.
Christ opening the Gates of Hell.
Transfiguration.
Entombment.
Madonna.
Adoration of the Magi.
Coronation of the Virgin.
Three Reliquaries. One adorned with "The Virgin and Child;" second with the "Annunciation" and "Adoration of the Magi;" and the third with a "Coronation of the Virgin and Saints." (*From the Sacristy of Santa Maria Novella.*)

FIESOLE. San Domenico.

Madonna and Saints (*the predella is in the National Gallery*).

In the Chapter House (*now a green-house*)—

Madonna and Saints.

FRANKFORT. Städel.

Virgin with twelve Angels.

LONDON. National Gallery.

Adoration of the Magi (*from the Lombardi-Baldi Collection, Florence*).

Christ—with the banner of the Resurrection in his left hand, in the midst of a choir of Angels, and crowds of the Blessed. In five compartments. (*Formerly the predella to the altar-piece in San Domenico at Fiesole.*)

LONDON. DUDLEY HOUSE.

Last Judgment (*from the Fesch Collection*).

Virgin and Child with Saints (*from the Bisenzio Collection, Rome*).

MUNICH. PINAKOTHEK.

The Almighty adored by Angels. ("*Falsely ascribed to Angelico.*" —*Crowe and Cavalcaselle.*)

Three scenes from the Lives of Cosmo and S. Damian (*part of a predella of the altar-piece, painted in* 1438 *for San Marco, Florence*).

ORVIETO. CATHEDRAL.

Christ, in a glory of Angels, as Judge—with sixteen Saints and Prophets to the right, and the Virgin and the Apostles to the left. (*All more or less damaged; finished by Signorelli in* 1499.)

PARIS. LOUVRE.

Coronation of the Virgin—on the predella, seven subjects: six scenes from the Life of S. Dominic, and in the centre Christ risen from the Tomb (*formerly in San Domenico, Fiesole*).

Crucifixion (*from the Convent of San Domenico, Fiesole*).

PERUGIA. PINACOTECA.

Annunciation (*from San Domenico, Perugia*).

Madonna and Saints.

Miracles of S. Nicholas of Bari.

ROME. VATICAN. *Capella di Niccolò V.*

Six scenes from the Life of S. Stephen. (*Above.*)

Six scenes from the Life of S. Lawrence. (*Below.*)

The Four Evangelists. (*On the Ceiling.*)

The Teachers of the Church. (*On the Vaulting.*)

VATICAN *Picture Gallery*—

S. Nicholas of Bari (*part of a predella*).

Madonna and Angels.

CORSINI PALACE.

Last Judgment.

Ascension. ("*Weak and re-painted.*"—*Crowe and Cavalcaselle.*)

Descent of the Holy Spirit. ("*Much restored.*"—*Crowe and Cavalcaselle.*)

TURIN. GALLERY.

Two Angels kneeling on Clouds.

FRA BENEDETTO.

We have seen that Fra Benedetto, the brother of Fra Angelico, entered simultaneously with him the convent at Fiesole. Fra Benedetto was also an artist, but of a very inferior order. He resembled his brother in piety and religious feeling, but had not the same talent; nor was he, like Fra Angelico, an industrious student from nature.

It is necessary to recognise the difference between the works of the two brothers, because, as they sometimes worked at the same painting, the fame of Fra Angelico has somewhat suffered through the faults of Fra Benedetto. A careful study of the two styles will reveal which is the work of Fra Benedetto, and account for an irregularity of painting which could not otherwise be explained in Fra Angelico's work. Benedetto's figures are dumpy and ill set, the heads too broad, the extremities badly finished, the feet ugly, and they are sketched with a heavy brown touch, while those of Fra Angelico are prepared with great lightness, and the touch, which is hardly perceived, of a brilliant red.

But as a miniaturist and illuminator Fra Benedetto earned a well deserved fame in the choir-books of S. Marco. They are in fourteen volumes, and still serve the church. They were executed between the years 1443–8. The writing is beautiful; they are filled with illuminations, valuable texts of ancient religious music, and bear the arms of Cosimo de' Medici, from whom Fra Benedetto received the commission.[1]

Like Fra Angelico, Fra Benedetto was particularly beloved by S. Antoninus, who made him sub-prior of S. Marco, where he lived till elected Prior of his former convent at Fiesole. There he died of the plague in 1448.

[1] See *ante*, p. 39.

CHAPTER IV.

FRA FILIPPO LIPPI, AND HIS IMMEDIATE FOLLOWERS.

FRA FILIPPO LIPPI. Born 1412 (?). Died 1469.

> "I drew men's faces on my copybooks,
> Scrawled them within the antiphonary's marge,
> Joined legs and arms to the long music notes,
> Found nose and eyes and chin for A's and B's,
> And made a string of pictures of the world;
> Betwixt the ins and outs of verb and noun,
> On the wall, the bench, the door."
>
> Browning's *Men and Women*, vol. i. p. 42.

THE life of Fra Filippo Lippi presents in all points as marked a contrast as possible to that of Fra Angelico; but it need only be the concern of these pages to treat of it so far as it is connected with his works as an artist. His great natural gifts showed themselves at a very early age. Having lost his parents in childhood, he was place by an aunt in the convent of the Carmine at Florence. Here, in 1402, he began his novitiate as a brother of the order, and here his drawings were so remarkable that he was allowed to abandon all other studies and to devote himself exclusively to art. Great models were immediately before him in Masaccio's paintings, newly completed, in the

Brancacci Chapel. He soon became so imbued with the style of the great master, that Vasari tells us it was as if the spirit of Masaccio had entered the body of Fra Filippo Lippi: and Lanzi says, that if he was not the actual pupil of Masaccio, he was the pupil of his works.

These early productions have all perished, but many of his altar-pieces and small pictures remain to testify to the fruit of his training in the Brancacci Chapel. Among the finest specimens of this early manner is the altar-piece, painted when he was only twenty-five years of age, for the church of the Santo Spirito at Florence, now in the Louvre. It represents *The Virgin* standing on the first step of her throne, between angels and archangels, presenting the infant Saviour to two kneeling bishops of the Augustine Order, SS. Frediano and Gregory. On account of the finish and expression of their upturned faces, these two figures are considered the best part of the painting; as, although the attitude of the Madonna is good, the head is commonplace, and that of our Saviour of the heavy, earthly type, with the short neck, which so often appears in Fra Filippo's representations of the Infant Christ. The Gradino belonging to it, representing the *Annunciation* and three other scenes, is now in the Accademia delle Belle Arti at Florence.[1]

We can form an idea of the amount of labour spent upon this picture from the account of a contemporary artist. Domenico Veneziano, in a letter written from Perugia (1438) to Pietro de' Medici, describes Fra Filippo as "engaged upon an altar-piece for the church of the Santo Spirito, which, if he were to work upon it day and night, might be completed in five years." [2]

We possess in our National Gallery another painting of the *Virgin Enthroned, surrounded by Saints and Angels,* said

[1] Quadri Grandi, No. 42. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. ii. p. 326.

[2] Vasari ed. 1878-9, vol. ii. note to p. 618.

to be by Fra Filippo Lippi; but, according to the latest edition of Vasari,[1] this is not the Santo Spirito altar-piece, although it is so marked in the catalogue.[2]

Three out of the other four pictures by Fra Filippo Lippi, in our National Collection, can be exactly traced (Nos. 248, 666, 667).

(1) The *Vision of S. Bernard*,[3] which was painted for forty lire in 1447, to adorn the space above the door of the Cancelleria in the Palazzo de' Signori at Florence.

It is a remarkable and authentic picture, but not by any means so attractively coloured as most of Fra Filippo's pictures.

(2 and 3) The *Annunciation*, and *S. John the Baptist with six other Saints*. These were painted for his patron, Cosimo de' Medici, for the Palazzo Riccardi, and, therefore, among the saints in the last picture, the usual compliment is paid of introducing SS. Cosmo and Damian among the saints. The pictures are both marked with the crest of the Medici, three feathers tied together in a ring. Cosimo de' Medici was, in truth, his constant patron, not only using his influence to procure for Fra Filippo ecclesiastical appointments, but giving him commissions for pictures, which he afterwards presented to the various potentates of Italy.

Among these we may mention Alfonso, King of Naples; and a letter is extant, written by Giovanni de' Medici to Messer Bartolommeo Serragli at Naples, June, 1456, rejoicing that one of Fra Filippo Lippi's pictures should be

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878–9, vol. ii. note to p. 618.

[2] Crowe and Cavalcaselle are doubtful whether this picture is by Fra Filippo at all, and see in it traces of the handiwork of Benozzo Gozzoli. Vol. ii. p. 350.

[3] No. 248, note. "The Saint, dressed in white, is represented writing his homilies at a desk placed on a table formed of the solid rock. On the desk is some paper and a leathern ink bottle; by his side are some books. The Virgin, surrounded by angels, appears before him."

so highly esteemed by his Majesty Alfonso, and offering him another by the same artist.[1]

This commerce of pictures between Florence and Naples accounts for those paintings which Fra Filippo Lippi is said to have executed during his supposed residence at Naples and Ancona after his deliverance from slavery in Barbary (1432–9). It is now established, by documents proving his continued residence in Tuscany at that period, that the artist was never at either town; and we learn with regret that the story of his having obtained his freedom by a clever sketch in charcoal of his master, is a fiction.

Besides the powerful support of the Medici, Fra Filippo had other patrons among the great families in Florence and its vicinity. In Arezzo we read of a certain Carlo Marzuppini, who commissioned him to paint the altar-piece for the Cappella S. Bernardo in Monte Oliveto of Arezzo.

Vasari records[2] that "Messer" Carlo found fault with the artist for the careless way in which he had painted the hands of his figures, and adds that in consequence of this remark Fra Filippo ever afterwards concealed the extremities of his figures with drapery.

The artist introduced the portrait of his critical patron into the picture, which is now in the Galleria Lateranense at Rome. It is said by competent critics, who have seen it there, that Messer Carlo had some ground for his complaints.[3]

The portrait of another patron, Messer Alessandro degli Alessandri, is introduced among the figures in an altar-piece painted for his chapel at Vincigliati. This picture was formerly in the Palazzo Strozzi, at Florence.

Fra Filippo painted, besides these, numerous other pictures

[1] Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. ii. p. 328.
[2] Vasari, ed. 1878–9, pp. 618, 619.
[3] Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. ii. p. 326.

for the churches and convents in Florence. Many of them have now found their way into the galleries at Florence; among these:—

The *Nativity of Christ*, with a choir of angels singing the "Gloria," and a background of rocks and caverns, into which are introduced figures of S. Mary Magdalen, S. Jerome, and another hermit, supposed to be a portrait.

A beautiful *Madonna with four Saints*, the best of his sacred pictures.

The large *Coronation of the Virgin*, originally painted for the nuns of S. Ambrogio, in which his own portrait as an old man appears, while an angel in front of him holds a scroll on which is written, "*Is perfecit opus.*" (See Illustration.)

The Predella of the Santo Spirito, which we have already mentioned.

One of his finest Madonnas is in the Pitti Palace, which, although not vulgar, is of that essentially earthly type which characterises all Fra Filippo's Madonnas. In all the accessories it also marks a deviation from the principle of devotion which had hitherto guided the treatment of this subject.[1]

But although the Italian critics select for especial praise his smaller pictures, on account of their graceful execution and the soft delicacy of their colouring, he derives another kind of fame from his frescoes at Prato and Spoleto. His first work in the cathedral was a picture representing the *Death of S. Bernard*, painted to fill the space above one of the side doors. In the centre of the painting the saint is represented lying in his coffin, which is supposed to heal

[1] "It is a circular picture representing the half length Virgin seated in a chair with the infant Saviour, all but naked, on her knee. In her left hand she holds a pomegranate which the Saviour grasps with his right, whilst, looking up, he holds a few of the red grains in his left."—Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. ii. p. 333.

THE CORONATION OF THE . BY FILIPPO LIPPI.

In the Accademia d Arti, at Florence.

all the sick who approach to touch it. Round it stand a group of weeping friars, among whom Fra Filippo introduced his own portrait. The expression of the heads is admirable, and the fresh and delicate colouring in the artist's best style.

This work gave such satisfaction to the superintendent of the cathedral, Geminiano Inghirami, for whom it was painted, that it obtained for Fra Filippo the commission to paint the frescoes in the choir. He chose two subjects, the life of S. John the Baptist, the patron saint of Florence, under whose rule Prato fell; and that of S. Stephen, the saint to whom the Church or "Pieve" (for it was not then a cathedral) was dedicated.

The scenes selected from the life of S. John the Baptist were—(1) his *Birth;* (2) *Parting from his Parents;* (3) his *Preaching in the Wilderness;* (4) the *Baptism of our Saviour;* (5) *Herod's Feast;* and (6) the *Decapitation of the Baptist.*

The *Preaching in the Wilderness* and *Herod's Feast* are considered to be the most remarkable of this series. In the first, Fra Filippo succeeds in giving a look of almost divine inspiration to the countenance of the preacher, while the listening crowd exhibit every variety of expression and attitude as they hang upon his words. The same talent for varying the expression and attitude of his figures finds full scope in *Herod's Feast,* which is represented with much splendour, and again the artist introduces his own portrait, dressed in his friar's dress, among the guests. These are clad in the costumes of the period, richly ornamented and embroidered, with the Florentine head-dress of the period. The dismay of the guests when the decapitated head is brought in is admirably rendered.

The frescoes representing the life of S. Stephen occupy the opposite side of the choir. In the last of these—the *Lamentation over the Death of S. Stephen*—is considered almost equal to Raphael in the varied attitudes and motion

of his figures. Among the bystanders he introduced portraits of himself, Fra Diamante, and Carlo de' Medici, a very powerful and unmistakable portrait. All the figures are larger than life, a practice which was afterwards much adopted by succeeding artists.

The decoration of the choir at Prato, often interrupted by other commissions, was not completed till the year 1465. To the same period belong the altar-pieces for the churches of Sta. Margherita and San Domenico at Prato, and others, which have now found their way into the museum there. The frescoes at Spoleto, representing scenes from the *Life of the Virgin*, were on the same grandiose scale. They were painted in the apse of the cathedral. Fra Filippo was never able to complete them; dying suddenly, it is said, from poison, in 1469. He was buried in the cathedral at Spoleto, in the midst of his unfinished labours.

Fra Filippo was looked upon as the greatest colourist of his age, especially in wall painting, where he succeeded in giving great charm to his colouring. He was a powerful and rapid draughtsman, thoroughly acquainted with the technicalities of his art, although, partly on account of the indolence of his nature, he had a tendency to generalise the drawing of the hands and feet of his figures. Although he formed his style upon Masaccio, he never attained to his master's serious and dignified treatment of his subjects; a certain coarseness of thought and a want of spirituality mar paintings which would be otherwise full of grace. He has also the unenviable distinction of being the first among the artists to introduce a wilful irreverence into his treatment of sacred subjects, one of the first steps which led to the final desecration of religious art. His method of dealing with drapery will serve as an illustration of this; which, in his hands, underwent a complete transformation, consistent with the realising tendency of the time. He attempted the imitation of texture and material, a practice hitherto un-

known among the artists; and it is a painful shock to devotional feeling when he introduces the costume of the day into the most sacred scenes, clothing the angels in the Florentine garb, and exchanging the ideal drapery of the Virgin for the same realistic style. Sir Joshua Reynolds tells us that "it is the inferior style that marks variety of stuffs; in the grand style the clothing is neither woollen nor linen, nor silk nor satin, nor velvet—it is drapery, and nothing more."

The immediate followers and pupils of Fra Filippo were—Fra Diamante, who assisted him in the frescoes at Prato and Spoleto. He also painted two or three altar-pieces at Prato, and the latest commentary has assigned to him a fresco in the Sistine Chapel of *Our Saviour giving the Keys to S. Peter*, hitherto said to be by Fra Bartolommeo della Gatta.[1]

Jacopo del Sellajo was another pupil and assistant, but of his works little is known. Francesco Peselli and Sandro Botticelli were pupils of considerably more mark, and will find their place in succeeding chapters.

THE PRINCIPAL WORKS OF FILIPPO LIPPI.

BERLIN. MUSEUM.

Madonna and Child.

Madonna adoring the Infant Christ, with S. John and S. Bernard (*signed* FRATER PHILIPPVS. P).

The Virgin of Mercy.

FLORENCE. ACCADEMIA DELLE BELLE ARTI.

Madonna and Saints (*from Santa Croce, Florence: the predella is by Pesellino*).

Coronation of the Virgin (*signed* IS. PERFECIT. OPUS; *from Sant Ambrosio, Florence*).

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878-9, p. 641.

FLORENCE. Accademia delle Belle Arti (*continued*).

Predella, Annunciation, and three other scenes (*from the Convent of Santo Spirito, Florence: predella of the "Virgin and Child" in the Louvre*).

Virgin adoring the Infant Christ, with the Magdalen, S. Jerome and S. Hilarion (*from the Church of the Annalena, Florence*).

Virgin and Child, with S. John the Baptist and a Camaduline Monk (*from the Convent of the Camalduli*).

Uffizi.

S. Augustin. ("*Certainly not by Fra Filippo, but is either by Filippino or Botticelli.*"—*Crowe and Cavalcaselle.* "*Certainly by Filippino.*"—*Burckhardt's* "*Cicerone.*")

Virgin adoring the Infant Christ, with Angels (*the drawing for this is also in the Uffizi*).

Pitti Palace.

Madonna and Child (*The Madonna is* said *to be a portrait of Lucrezia Buti*).

San Lorenzo.

Annunciation.

Chiesa degli Innocenti.

Virgin and Child, with Saints (*similar to the picture in the Uffizi*).

LONDON. National Gallery.

The Vision of S. Bernard.

Madonna and Child enthroned, surrounded by Angels and Saints (*said to be from Santo Spirito, Florence.* "*It bears the stamp of the school of Fra Filippo, with a mixture of characteristic features peculiar to the manner of Benozzo Gozzoli.*"—*Crowe and Cavalcaselle*).

The Virgin Mary seated, an Angel presenting the Infant Christ to her. ("*Its style shows it to be by one who issued from the school of the Carmelite.*"—*Crowe and Cavalcaselle.*)

The Annunciation (*painted for Cosmo de' Medici*).

S. John the Baptist with six other Saints (*painted for Cosmo de' Medici*).

The Adoration of the Magi. (*In the catalogue* "*ascribed to Filippino Lippi.*" *Mr. J. A. Crowe attributes it to Filippo.*)

MUNICH. Pinakothek.

The Annunciation.

Madonna and Child.

PARIS. LOUVRE.

The Nativity (*from the church of S. Margherita, Prato. Crowe and Cavalcaselle consider that it is probably by Francesco Peselli*).

The Virgin and Child (*from Santo Spirito, Florence*).

PRATO. SAN DOMENICO. *In the Refectory.*

The Infant Christ adored by the Virgin and Saints.

CATHEDRAL.

Life of S. John the Baptist.

Life of S. Stephen.

Death of S. Bernard.

GALLERY.

The Virgin giving the Girdle to S. Thomas (*perhaps painted for Santa Margherita, Prato*).

The Virgin and Saints and four poor members of the Ceppo.

Predella (*said to be that of the Nativity in the Louvre*).

ROME. LATERAN GALLERY.

Coronation of the Virgin (*painted for Carlo Marzuppini*).

PALAZZO DORIA.

The Annunciation.

SPOLETO. CATHEDRAL.

Scenes from the Life of the Virgin (*completed by Fra Diamante in* 1470).

TURIN. GALLERY.

Two Bishops.

FILIPPINO LIPPI. BORN 1460. DIED 1504.

The birth of Filippino di Filippo Lippi is enveloped in hopeless obscurity. Unfortunately his registry in the guild of the Florentine painters is illegible. Vasari tells us that he died in 1505, aged forty-five. That would place his birth in 1460—a date given by many writers. Others give 1461, and some 1458.

The story of his being a son of Filippo Lippi has long been dismissed. That he was a favourite pupil of the Frate is

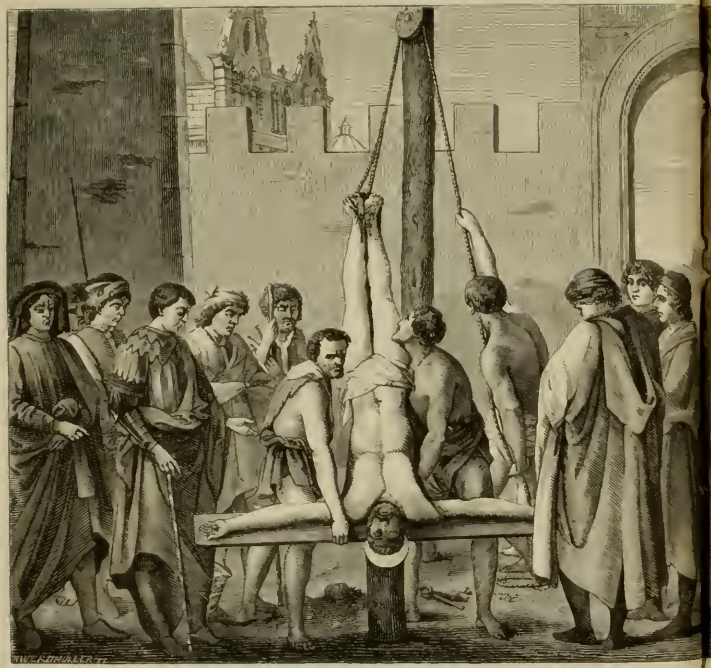
probable, and an adopted son or a relative of some degree quite possible. Apart from the commissions he received for paintings, and the dates on his works, we have but scanty records of his life. He was educated at Prato.

In 1496 he and Perugino and Cosimo Rosselli were called upon to value Baldovinetti's fresco in the Gianfigliazzi chapel in Santa Trinità, Florence. And in the following year he married: his wife's name was Margherita: his son Francesco became a friend of Benvenuto Cellini.

In 1498 Filippino was appointed, with Perugino and Lorenzo di Credi, a member of the committee to decide on the best means of repairing the damage, done by a storm, to the lantern above the cupola of Santa Maria del Fiore, Florence. In 1501 we find him mentioned, by a member of the Town Council of Prato, as a "fit person" to paint a picture for the audience chamber of the Palazzo Pubblico. And the last record we have of him, previous to his death, is on the 25th of January, 1504 (the year of his death), when he, with Leonardo da Vinci, Perugino, Ghirlandajo, and others, was called upon to decide on a fitting place for Michelangelo's *David*. And it was Filippino who made the most practical suggestion, that as Michelangelo had made the statue, he should be asked to say what site it should occupy.

The instruction in art of Filippino Lippi was confided to the care of Sandro Botticelli and Fra Diamante.

Of these two teachers, Filippino seems to have been most guided by the style of Fra Diamante. Many years of work under Fra Filippo had thoroughly imbued Fra Diamante with his master's manner, hence the indelible stamp of the Frate which appears in Filippino's works. But Filippino was free from many of the defects which are blots upon the paintings of the Carmelite artist. He is never coarse or vulgar in his treatment of sacred subjects, and was far better able to appreciate the grandeur of Masaccio's manner when called upon to complete the painting of the frescoes in the



THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. PETER.

ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL BEFORE THE PROCONSUL.

BY FILIPPINO LIPPI. *In the Brancacci in Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence.*

Brancacci Chapel,[1] which had remained unfinished since Masaccio abandoned them fifty-eight years before. Here he shows himself fully capable of grasping the serious dignity of Masaccio's style. Although not quite equal to the great master either in the clearness of his colours, or in the distribution of his groups, some of the individual figures are magnificent; if we take, for example, that of S. Paul standing before the prison of S. Peter, which was afterwards adopted with little alteration by Raphael in his famous cartoon.

The *Visit of S. Paul to S. Peter in Prison* and the *Liberation of S. Peter* occupy the two pilasters of the chapel, and were his first composition there. The next, of *SS. Peter and Paul before the Proconsul*, although the figures are noble and dignified, shows the failure in distributing his groups, and the same fault appears in the *Crucifixion of S. Peter*. The last fresco was the *Resurrection of the King's Son*, left incomplete by Masaccio. Filippino's work in this painting comprised the youth himself, painted from a portrait of the painter Granacci, and the figures of the surrounding group; among them, the artist introduced portraits of the historian Guicciardini, Luigi Pulci the poet, Antonio Pollaiuolo, a contemporary artist, and many others.

His fame as an artist being undeniably established by the completion of this task, Filippino received numerous commissions. The archives of Florence record that he was chosen (in 1492) to replace Perugino, then absent at Rome, in the adornment of the hall of the Palazzo Pubblico. It is not known whether or not he performed this office, but we do know that about this period he finished the great painting of the *Madonna and Saints* in the Uffizi, originally intended

[1] *S. Peter in Prison visited by S. Paul*, and *S. Peter freed from Prison; SS. Peter and Paul before the Proconsul;* the *Crucifixion of S. Peter;* the *Resuscitation of the King's Son* (begun by Masaccio). Vasari, ed. 1878-9, vol. iii. pp. 479 *et seq.* See also p. 488 *et seq.* for the new commentary, in which Filippino is undoubtedly proved to have finished these frescoes.

for the Sala degli Otto in the Palazza Pubblico. This picture was only rivalled by the altar-piece painted by him in the Badia at Florence; which, executed when he was only twenty years old, is always considered, for drawing, expression, and vigorous colour, the best type of his early manner. Fra Filippo's treatment of the same subject, the *Vision of S. Bernard* (now in our National Gallery), is very different. The altar-piece of the Cappella Nerli in the Santo Spirito at Florence belongs also to Filippino's prime.

His next commission was from Rome, where he was summoned by Cardinal Olivieri Caraffa, to paint the Cappella Caraffa, in Sta. Maria sopra Minerva.[1] He ornamented this chapel with scenes from the *Legend of S. Thomas Aquinas;* and although these allegorical and ceremonial subjects were not in harmony with his genius, he showed a remarkable advance in his power of distributing his figures in the principal scene, which represents the *Miracle of the Crucifix.* In another episode, the *Glorification of S. Thomas,* he gives a marvellous variety of expression to the false teachers who have been confounded by the reasoning of the saint.

In another part of the chapel he represents scenes from the *Life of the Virgin,* but these have been retouched. The Caraffa Chapel was finished in 1493. The altar-piece painted for S. Francesco del Palco at Prato belongs to about the same period (1495). It is still recorded how the brotherhood[2] intended the commission for Domenico Ghirlandajo, but could not raise the sum he required for it, and therefore entrusted it to Filippino. In the following year he painted for S. Donato al Scopeto at Florence an altar-piece, the *Adoration of the Magi,* and followed the pyramidal form of composition adopted by Fra Filippo in his treatment of the same subject. Filippino's composition is considered to be the better of the

[1] On his journey to Rome he was commissioned by Lorenzo de' Medici to order on his behalf a magnificent tomb to be erected to Fra Filippo in the cathedral at Spoleto.

[2] Vasari, ed. 1878–9, p. 467.

VISION OF SAINT BERNARD. BY FILIPPINO LIPPI.

In the Church of La Badia, Florence.

two, some of his heads being little inferior to those of Raphael.

Quite late in his career he painted, for the heirs of Filippo Strozzi, the paintings in the Strozzi Chapel, for which he had received the commission, when at Rome in 1489, from Filippo Strozzi himself. The taste of the decorations of the Strozzi Chapel have been called in question, because of the grotesque mixture of exaggerated actions, the architecture overcharged with ornament, and the too brilliant colouring. But these faults are compensated for by traits of great beauty. The artist's extraordinary power of representing emotion and varied dramatic action is nowhere more clearly shown. The paintings represent the *Miracles of SS. John and Philip.* In one of these—the *Resuscitation of Drusiana by S. John*—he succeeds in giving a wonderful expression of returning life to Drusiana, as she raises herself upon the bier, from which the bearers flee in terror, while a number of women remain in trembling attention, with children clinging to their knees.

The same animation and movement appears in another of the series, in which *S. Philip exorcises the Dragon.* The figures are drawn with peculiar energy and ease—the women beautiful, and the men dignified.

These frescoes are also remarkable for the careful painting of the accessories—vases, armour, head-dresses, swords, togas, and sacerdotal vestments, of which Filippino made a careful study, and he was among the first of the artists who introduced this new feature into art. Filippino died suddenly on April 18th, 1504. He was universally beloved not only on account of his rare talents, but also because of his blameless life, unfailing gentleness and courtesy to all. Vasari records that he was carried to the grave in the Church of San Michele Bisdomini, Florence, with every mark of public esteem.

Among his pupils, Rafaellino del Garbo was the one who most closely followed his master's manner.

THE PRINCIPAL WORKS OF FILIPPINO LIPPI.

BERLIN. MUSEUM.

Portrait of a Young Man.
Madonna and Child.
Christ on the Cross, with the Virgin and S. Francis.
Madonna and Child.

BOLOGNA. SAN DOMENICO.

Madonna and Saints. 1501.

FLORENCE. BADIA.

The Vision of S. Bernard. 1480.

SANTA MARIA DEL CARMINE. *In the Brancacci Chapel.*

S. Peter in prison visited by S. Paul.
S. Peter freed from prison.
S. Peter and S. Paul before the Proconsul.
Crucifixion of S. Peter.
Recuscitation of the King's son (*begun by Masaccio*).

SANTA MARIA NOVELLA. *In the Chapel of Filippo Strozzi.*

The Miracles and Martyrdom of the Apostles John and Philip.

ACCADEMIA DELLE BELLE ARTI.

Deposition from the Cross (*the lower part by Perugino: from the SS. Annunziata, Florence*).
S. Augustin. (*Attributed in the Catalogue to Filippo Lippi; ascribed by Mr. Crowe to Filippino.*)

CORSINI GALLERY.

Virgin and Child with Saints.

PITTI PALACE.

Holy Family with Angels. ("*It wants the finish and feeling noticeable in Filippino.*"—*Crowe and Cavalcaselle.*)
The Death of Lucretia.

TORRIGIANI PALACE.

The Life of Esther (*panels of a wedding-chest*).

SANTO SPIRITO. *In the Cappella Nerli.*

Madonna with S. Martin and S. Catherine.

FLORENCE. UFFIZI.

Adoration of the Magi (*signed* FILIPPUS ME PINXIT DE LIPSIS FLORENTINUS, *and dated* 1496; *painted for San Donato al Scopeto, Florence*).

Madonna and Child with Saints (*painted in* 1485 *for the Sala degli Otto in the Palazzo Signoria, Florence*).

S. Augustin. (*This work, though given in the catalogue to Filippo, is by several authorities attributed to Filippino.*)

LONDON. NATIONAL GALLERY.

The Virgin and Child, S. Jerome and S. Dominic adoring the Infant Christ (*painted for the Rucellai Chapel in San Pancrazio, Florence*).

Adoration of the Magi (*originally part of a painted chest*).

S. Francis in Glory (*dated* MCCCCXCII).

LUCCA. SAN MICHELE.

Madonna enthroned with Saints.

MUNICH. PINAKOTHEK.

The Appearance of Christ to the Virgin (*painted about* 1495, *for the Brotherhood of S. Francesco del Palco, at Prato*).

Pietà (*given in the catalogue to Ghirlandajo. Crowe and Cavalcaselle consider that it is by Filippino*).

PRATO. MERCATALE.

Madonna and Saints (*a tabernacle*).

ROME. SANTA MARIA SOPRA MINERVA. *In the Capella Caraffa.*

Legend of S. Thomas Aquinas.

SAN GIMIGNANO. PALAZZO PUBBLICO.

The Annunciation.

CHAPTER V.

BENOZZO GOZZOLI. Born 1420. Died 1498.

"Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a life-long monument."

BENOZZO GOZZOLI was the favourite pupil and companion of Fra Angelico. He was almost the last artist who represented the expiring school of sacred art in Italy; but even in his case, the influence of his master seems only to have guided the first period of his painting. In his later works he became a decided realist, using Scripture scenes and subjects chiefly as a means for the representation of luxurious dress, animal life, and landscape.

Benozzo di Lese di Sandro, commonly called Benozzo Gozzoli, was born at Florence in 1420 (or, according to his father's income paper of 1470, in 1424). Gozzoli, as we have seen, accompanied Fra Angelico to Rome, and was his assistant in decorating the cathedral of Orvieto in 1447. Two years later he parted from his master, and went to seek his own fortune. He first applied to the Council of the Duomo at Orvieto, for the commission to complete Fra Angelico's unfinished work; but was met by the request to give some proof of his skill. In this he would appear to have been unsuccessful, as he did not receive the commission; and we next hear of him at

Montefalco, near Foligno, the scene of Fra Angelico's early works. Here his master's name stood him in good stead, for he obtained many commissions, and his paintings at this period show more than any of his other works the impress of his master's manner.

He painted some frescoes for the Church of S. Fortunato, about a mile from the town; a *Virgin and Child*, above the portal, with all the fresh purity of Fra Angelico's colouring; an altar-piece of *S. Thomas receiving the Girdle*, with a gradino representing scenes from the *Life of the Virgin;* an *Annunciation*, in fresco on the walls, and an *Apotheosis of S. Fortunato*, which has been much repainted. His labours for the church and monastery of S. Francesco in the same town were more considerable. The apse of the church and four sides of the choir are occupied by *Twelve Scenes from the Life of S. Francis;* and on the base of each of the four sides are medallion portraits of S. Francis and the most illustrious men of his order. Among these are introduced those of Dante, Petrarch, and Giotto,[1] with Latin inscriptions. The whole work is signed by the painter, and dated 1452.[2]

He remained at Montefalco till 1456, painting also for the Chapel of S. Jerome, and a large altar-piece for a Perugian church,[3] still in the manner of his master, though he never attains to his excellence.

In 1457, Gozzoli was summoned to Florence by Piero de' Medici; here his paintings in the Palazzo Ricardi give evidence that he was no longer proof against the temptations of the realistic school. His great fresco in the chapel, which represented the journey of the wise men from their own country, and their return to it, in one long procession of figures, on

[1] Beneath that of Giotto :—

"Pictorum eximius Jottus
fundamentum et lux."

[2] Vasari, ed. 1878-9, p. 60.

[3] Now in the gallery at Perugia.

foot and on horseback, covered the whole walls of the body of the building.

Here Benozzo appears to have laid aside his master's religious and devotional treatment of the subject, and to have adopted another, which, though full of invention and variety, was purely secular. All religious feeling is merged in the gay and brilliant *cortége* of crowned kings, knights, pages, and squires, horses with their trappings, leopards, and dogs, with a profusion of gold ornament, which with portraits in the costume of the time down to the minutest details, make a living page out of the history of the fifteenth century.

Something of his master's teaching reappears in the paintings of angels singing and scattering flowers as they advance, which adorn the sanctuary of the choir. Fra Angelico's influence is still more evident in one of the panel pictures, considered to be Benozzo's best example, representing the *Virgin Enthroned*, painted for the Compagnia di S. Marco, and now in the National Gallery.[1]

At S. Gimignano during the years 1463–4, Benozzo finished a series of wall-paintings, under the patronage of Domenico Strambi, for the Church of S. Agostino, representing scenes from the *Life of S. Augustin;* and several of the neighbouring churches contain frescoes executed by him at this period.

But the scene of his greatest labours was Pisa. The Pisans were beginning to recover from the calamities with which they had been overwhelmed at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Once more they had leisure to think of those arts of peace which they had been the first to promote in Italy. Their far-famed Campo Santo was not complete, the north wall was still bare, and they entrusted the work of decorating it to Benozzo in 1469. He was at this time past fifty, but so

[1] No. 283. The contract stipulated that the figure of the Virgin was to be made similar in mode, form, and ornament to *The Virgin Enthroned*, over the high altar of S. Marco, Florence, by Fra Giovanni da Fiesole.

THE CAMPO SANTO AT PISA. (The North Side.)

Showing the position of Benozzo Gozzoli's Frescoes.

passionate was his love of art, so indefatigable his powers, that he cheerfully undertook a task, which, according to Vasari, was sufficient to scare a whole army of painters.[1]

The frescoes were twenty-four in number, but two out of the twenty-four have completely perished. They represent scenes from the Old Testament, beginning with Noah, and ending with the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon. The accompanying illustration shows their position on the wall. On the extreme right hand are, on the top, the *Fall of Jericho* and *David and Goliath*, and underneath *Aaron's Rod*.

This marvellous series, in which Benozzo displays an endlessly fertile imagination, took sixteen years to accomplish. It has the same features as the *Adoration of the Magi*, in the Palazzo Riccardi. Hundreds of figures, rich colours, ample draperies, profusion of accessories; portraits of the great people of his time, Cosimo, Lorenzo, and Giuliano de' Medici, Poliziano, and the artist himself on horseback, witnessing the adoration of the eastern kings before the shrine at Bethlehem. Perhaps some remnant of his master's spirit induced the painter to introduce the portraits of the living only as spectators, not as taking part in the action of the scene, as if to suggest that the scenes of sacred history belong to all time, and must pass before the understanding of all mankind. The frescoes were executed in tempera, but owing to some new method employed by the artist, great portions of the colouring have perished, especially in the fresco of the *Queen of Sheba*, of which scarcely a fragment remains.

Both as a draughtsman and a colourist, Benozzo Gozzoli was more a clever imitator of the masterpieces of other artists, than gifted with any great original talent. But this power of imitation, which serves him up to a certain point, in lieu of scientific principle, fails him at critical moments, such as the foreshortening of his figures, in which he showed the

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878–9, p. 49.

deficiencies of Fra Angelico's school; and the perspective of his architecture.

Even with this gigantic work in hand, Benozzo found means to paint several other pictures in Pisa; *The Apotheosis of Thomas Aquinas*, for the Duomo;[1] the *Virgin and S. Anna* for S. Marta, now in the Academy of Pisa; also in the same gallery, *A Virgin and Child*, once in S. Benedetto a Ripa d' Arno, and another of the same subject in the Monastery of S. Anna. The Pisans, as a token of their gratitude for such gigantic labours on their behalf, erected a tomb for him, in the midst of them in the Campo Santo, which they presented to him, during his lifetime, in 1478. The inscription in one of the frescoes above records that his surrounding works are his best monument. The frescoes were finished in 1485, but records prove Benozzo to have been alive in 1496. He died in 1498, at the age of seventy-eight.

Zanobi Macchiavelli was the chief pupil of Benozzo Gozzoli. They worked together in the Campo Santo; he was not an artist of very high powers, but his ability rather consisted in imitating great models. He is supposed to have painted the *Madonna and Child* (No. 586), ascribed to Fra Filippo Lippi in the National Gallery. In the Louvre the *Coronation of the Virgin* is signed with his name, and the date 1473;[2] and there is another painting of the same subject in the Academy of Pisa. He must not be confounded with Zanobi Strozzi, a miniaturist, and a pupil of Fra Angelico.

Melozzo da Forli has sometimes been confused with Benozzo Gozzoli. He was a contemporary (born 1438, died 1494), and executed some considerable paintings in several churches at Rome. Among these, an altar-piece in the Chiesa degli Santi-Apostoli, representing the *Ascension*, was once a fine painting, but only a fragment of it is now extant. He also painted portraits of the *Popes Sixtus IV.* and *Julius II.* in the Vatican.

[1] Now in the Louvre.

[2] Not now exhibited.

NOAH AND HIS FAMILY. BY BENOZZO GOZZOLI.

In the Campo Santo at Pisa.

Melozzo is supposed to have been the *protégé* of Federigo di Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino. Two out of the seven pictures painted by Melozzo for the Palace at Urbino are now in our National Gallery. Another is in the possession of Her Majesty the Queen.

THE PRINCIPAL WORKS OF BENOZZO GOZZOLI.

FLORENCE. Palazzo Riccardi.

The journey of the Magi to Bethlehem. 1463.

Uffizi.

A predella—Christ between S. John and the Magdalen; the Marriage of S. Catherine (*from Santa Croce, Florence*).

LONDON. National Gallery.

The Virgin and Child enthroned (*painted in* 1461 *for the 'Compagnia di San Marco,' Florence*).

The Rape of Helen.

MONTEFALCO. San Fortunato.

Virgin and Child (*painted about* 1450).
Apotheosis of S. Fortunato ,, ,, ,,
Annunciation ,, ,, ,,

Monastery of San Francesco.

Scenes from the Life of S. Francis. 1452. (*In the choir.*)

Madonna and Saints. 1452. (*In the chapel of S. Jerome.*)

PARIS. Louvre.

Apotheosis of St. Thomas Aquinas (*painted for the Cathedral at Pisa*).

PERUGIA. Gallery.

Madonna and Child with Saints. OPUS BENOTII DE FLORĒTIA MCCCCLVI.

PISA. CAMPO SANTO.

Scenes from the Old Testament [1] :—

(i.) Noah and his Family; (ii.) The Curse of Ham; (iii.) The building of the Tower of Babel; (iv.) Adoration of the Magi; (v.) Abraham and the worship of Baal; (vi.) Abraham and Lot in Egypt; (vii.) Abraham's Victory; (viii.) Abraham and Hagar; (ix.) Sodom and the escape of Lot; (x.) Sacrifice of Isaac; (xi.) Marriage of Rebecca; (xii.) Birth of Jacob and Esau; (xiii.) Marriage of Jacob and Rachel, and Jacob's Dream; (xiv.) Meeting of Jacob and Esau, and Rape of Dinah; (xv.) The Innocence of Joseph; (xvi.) Joseph made known to his brethren; (xvii.) Moses's first Miracle; (xviii.) Passage of the Red Sea; (xix.) The Tables of the Law; (xx.) Aaron's rod; (xxi.) Fall of Jericho, and David and Goliath; (xxii.) The Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon. *The "Destruction of Dathan and Abiram," and the "Death of Aaron," are now no longer existing.* [*Painted from* 1469 *to* 1485.]

ACADEMY.

The Conception (*painted for Santa Marta, Pisa*).

Virgin and Child with Saints (*painted for S. Benedetto a Ripo d'Arno, Pisa*).

MONASTERY OF SANTA ANNA.

Virgin and Child, with two Angels.

ROME. LATERAN GALLERY.

S. Thomas receiving the girdle. On the predella, scenes from the Life of the Virgin (*from San Fortunato, Montefalco*).

SAN GIMIGNANO. SANT' AGOSTINO.

S. Sebastian. 1464.

Scenes from the Life of S. Augustin (*seventeen scenes, from his school-days to his death*). 1463–4.

PIEVE.

Martyrdom of S. Sebastian. 1465.

Madonna (*painted in* 1466 *for S. Maria Magdalena in San Gimignano*).

SANT' ANDREA (*near San Gimignano*).

Madonna and Saints (*signed and dated* 1466).

TERNI. SAN FRANCESCO.

Marriage of S. Catherine (*signed and dated* 1466).

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[1] Arranged in the order given by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. II. page 510, et seq.

CHAPTER VI.

OIL PAINTING IN FLORENCE.

ANDREA DEL CASTAGNO. DOMENICO VENEZIANO. BALDOVINETTI. PESELLO AND PESELLINO.

ANDREA DEL CASTAGNO, and Domenico Veneziano, have hitherto been as inseparably coupled together in history, as Ugolino and his enemy the Archbishop Ruggiero in Dante's *Inferno*;[1] and for the same reason—one being supposed to have been the victim of the treachery of the other.

The much vexed question of the introduction of oil-painting into Italy is founded on this story, which is as follows, in the first edition of Vasari. Domenico Veneziano, when in Venice learnt the secret of oil-painting from Antonello da Messina, to whom it had been communicated by Jan van Eyck in Flanders. Domenico Veneziano brought this new invention to Florence, where he astonished the artists by the brilliancy of his colouring.

Andrea del Castagno, the friend of Domenico, persuaded him to impart the secret of his method, and then murdered him. Two motives are alleged for this atrocious crime. First, that he was jealous of the superiority of Domenico's painting in a work they were simultaneously

[1] Canto xxxii. l. 15.

engaged upon, in the church of Sta. Maria Nuova; secondly, that he wished to remain the sole possessor of the marvellous discovery.

This story, universally accepted hitherto, has been re-examined by Signor Milanesi, the great modern authority on Italian art.[1]

In his new gloss upon Vasari we find the conclusive argument that, as Domenico Veneziano survived Andrea del Castagno four years, he could not have fallen a victim to the jealousy of his fellow artist in the way Vasari describes.[2]

It is further stated that the reason for this supposed jealousy was also unfounded, as the two painters did not work simultaneously in Sta. Maria Nuova, Domenico's frescoes being finished in 1445, six years before Andrea began his share of the decoration of the choir.

The learned commentator can only account for the imputation which has for four centuries stained the fame of Andrea del Castagno, by suggesting, that in 1448, one Domenico di Matteo, a painter, was murdered in Florence by an enemy, who might possibly have been another painter, Andrea di Matteo, who died in 1457. The works both of Andrea del Castagno and Domenico Veneziano in Sta. Maria Nuova have perished; but other works remain to prove that both of them were painters of considerable merit.

It remains a disputed point whether the Florentine artists did derive the secret of oil painting from Domenico Veneziano.

There is no doubt that in the list of expenses for painting the frescoes in Sta. Maria Nuova, there are items of linseed oil supplied in large quantities to Messer Domenicho di Vine-

[1] Ann. 1862. *Gennaio-Marzo*, p. 1. The question was first opened in the *Giornale Storico degli Archivi Toscani.*

[2] Andrea del Castagno died in 1457, Domenico Veneziano in 1461, according to the records of the *Libri dei Morti* in Florence. Vasari, ed. 1878–9, pp. 683, 689.

zia ;[1] but, on the other hand, those who have examined his painting now in the Church of Sta. Lucia de' Bardi declare that it is painted in tempera, with no trace of oil; from which two things it would appear that in employing linseed oil to temper his colours for fresco painting he was only following a practice which had been frequently adopted before, but that in panel painting he either could not or would not use it.

The question as to the use of oil as a vehicle in painting has been discussed with vehemence by all the great writers on art, both as to the exact date when it was first introduced, and the method in which it was used by the artists. The result of their deliberations would appear to be as follows :—Linseed oil was no doubt used in painting as early as the eleventh century. We find frequent mention made of it in the writings of the Monk Rugerius, or Theophilus, called *The Schedule of Different Arts.* Thirty out of the forty chapters of this most interesting work refer to the preparation and application of pigments both for oil, tempera, and fresco painting.[2] It was not, however, used by Giunta and his contemporaries, although their paintings have a certain brilliancy of colouring very like the effect produced by oil painting. A careful chemical analysis has proved this brilliancy to be derived from wax, a vehicle much employed by the Greeks in encaustic painting.[3] This practice declined towards the end of the thirteenth century, and was succeeded by that of tempera.

[1] *Giornale Storico degli Arch. Toscani*, 1862. *Gennaio-Marzo*, p. 6.

[2] Lib. i. c. 18, 20, 26, 27. "And then take the colours which you wish to lay on, rubbing them diligently in linseed oil without water, and make mixtures for faces and drapery as before you have made with water ; beasts, too, and birds, or foliage, you will diversify with their own colours at your will."—Cap. 26, Lib. i. p. 45.

[3] "The colours were mixed with melted wax, and applied to an absorbent ground, into which they sank. When the whole was finished a

Towards the middle of the fifteenth century (1437) we find that oil was used by Andrea Cennini in the background of his pictures, both in colours and gold, but not for figures. There are also many other records of oil being in common use as a medium, in England,[1] France, and Germany before the time of Van Eyck.

The difference between the old method and that discovered by the Flemish painter may be described as follows:—According to the old system, it was impossible to put another colour upon the canvas until the first had dried. On this account the artist had a practice—which Theophilus describes as "overlong and tedious"[2]—of exposing their picture to the sun, and waiting till each tint had separately dried. Van Eyck found the extreme inconvenience of this method when his panel cracked right across from the heat of the sun, and being somewhat of an alchemist as well as a painter, he bethought himself of composing colour with a species of oil and resin, which would dry of itself without exposure to the sun; which, when dry, would not be injured by water; which made the colours unite in a way hitherto unknown, and gave them an additional force and brilliancy. Therefore, although Van Eyck cannot be said absolutely to have invented the use of oil in painting, he certainly brought it to a perfection which it had never attained before.

hot iron was passed over it, which brought out the colours to the surface. This manner of painting was extremely durable, and had the advantage of not being easily injured by damp, sun, or air."—Mrs. Jameson, *Handbook to the Public Galleries of Art*, p. xxvii.

[1] "The King to his treasurer and chamberlain sends greeting: Pay out of our treasury to Odo, the goldsmith, and Edward his son, 117 shillings and 10 pence for oil, varnish, and colours bought by them, and for paintings made in the Queen's chamber at Westminster, to the octaves of the Holy Trinity (May 25), in the twenty-third year of our reign [1239] to the Feast of S. Barnabas (June 11), in the same year, that is, for fifteen days."—Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting*, ed. 1828, vol. i. p. 13.

[2] Lib. i. cap. 27, "*diuturnam et tædiosum nimis.*"

The new system was first practised in the south of Italy by the Neapolitan painters, and pre-eminently by Antonello da Messina, who brought the art to great perfection, and carried it with him to Venice, where the inscription on his tombstone[1] gives him the credit of having first introduced the system of oils into Italian painting. But he could not have imparted the secret to Domenico Veneziano; Antonello da Messina was only twice in Venice, once in 1445, and again in 1470.[2] In 1445 Domenico was established in Florence; in 1470 he had been dead some years. It is, therefore, still uncertain how Van Eyck's discovery became known to the north of Italy. We only know that, dating from the close of the fifteenth century, the use of oil colours gradually superseded that of tempera in the Italian School.

Alesso Baldovinetti.

Alesso Baldovinetti, the master of Ghirlandajo, (born 1422, died 1499) and the Peselli are named by Vasari as foremost among the artists who made the experiment of introducing oils and varnishes as vehicles for their colours.

The Peselli.

The elder of the two Peselli, Giuliano d'Arrigo di Giuocolo Giuochi, is commonly known as "Pesello." He was born in

[1] D. O. M.

"This earth covers Antonello the painter, the chief ornament of his native Messina, and of all Sicily, celebrated for ever by artists with the highest praise—not only for his pictures in which there was a singular art and grace, but also because he first, with his colours mixed in oil, [gave] to Italian painting splendour and durability."

[2] One of the few paintings, by this master, still extant, an *Annunciation*, is now in the possession of the Right Hon. Sir R. Phillimore. The picture is painted much in the style of Van Eyck, in oils on a wooden panel.

1367 at Florence. He was in truth more of a sculptor and architect than a painter, being associated with Brunelleschi in the erection of the cupola of Sta. Maria del Fiore. But he seems to have formed the style of his grandson, Francesco di Stefano, who was born in 1422 and was left an orphan at the age of five; he was brought up as an artist by his grandfather, and was called, in consequence, "Pesellino."

Giuliano, or "Pesello," was looked upon as the best animal painter of his time. Pesellino's finest work, although not executed according to the new method, was the predella for Fra Filippo's Santa Croce altar-piece. This predella has now been divided into five pieces, of which three are in the Accademia in Florence, and two in the Louvre.

The works of the Peselli, even when taken together, were not numerous. Pesello died at the age of seventy-seven (1446), and was buried in the Carmine. Pesellino died young, at the age of thirty-five, in 1457, only surviving his grandfather eleven years.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GOLDSMITH PAINTERS OF FLORENCE.

THE POLLAIUOLI. SANDRO BOTTICELLI. DOMENICO GHIRLANDAJO. IL VERROCCHIO.

"L'antica gloria e'l celebrato onore,
Chi non sa della Medica famiglia
E del gran Cosmo, Italico splendore
Di cui la patria sua si chiamò figlia."

POLIZIANO, *Stanze per la giostra di Giuliano de' Medici*, Lib. ii. § 2.

THE POLLAIUOLI.

THE great affinity which always existed among the Florentines between the painter and the goldsmith is best illustrated by the group of artists by whom this early period of the Renaissance is closed—the Pollaiuoli, Sandro Botticelli, Domenico Ghirlandajo, and Il Verrocchio.

Antonio and Piero del Pollaiuolo were sons of Jacopo d'Antonio, a poulterer according to some biographers, hence the origin of the name; a goldsmith according to others, hence the origin of their profession. However that may be, Antonio del Pollaiuolo (born 1429,[1] died 1498) began his career as a goldsmith, a modeller, and a carver in wood and metal. He was first of all apprenticed to Bartoluccio, the stepfather of Lorenzo Ghiberti, and after that worked, it is said, under

[1] 1433 and other dates are also given.

the great Lorenzo himself, as an assistant in the second bronze gate of the Baptistery.

It is said that Lorenzo, when at one time engaged upon a particular group of ornament in this gate, left it to Antonio to finish, who thereupon introduced a quail of such perfect workmanship "that it only lacked the power of flying." [1]

As soon as his term of apprenticeship expired, Antonio opened a shop as goldsmith in the "Mercato Nuovo," Florence, where he rivalled Maso Finiguerra, the best modellist of the time, in the beauty and variety of his works, both in chiselled bronze, silver and gold, representing all sorts of figures and ornaments. The *dossale*, an elaborate silver altar for the church of S. Giovanni, is selected as a particular instance of this elaborate and beautiful kind of workmanship. It was engraved in low relief with incidents from the *Life of S. John the Baptist*, culminating with the *Feast of Herod* and the *Dance of the Daughter of Herodias*. It is still preserved in the cathedral, and exhibited every year on the festival of the saint.[2] He also supplied the altar with a silver cross and candlesticks of magnificent proportions.

Besides these, and many other works of the same kind, with which he embellished the churches of Florence, his talents ministered to the fastidious taste of Lorenzo, Il Magnifico. We read of a silver helmet carved by Antonio, and presented by Lorenzo to his general, Federigo di Montefeltro, after the successful sack of Volterra; and of a silver basin furnished to the Signori in 1473; but it would be impossible to enumerate the variety of articles, both ecclesiastical and secular, of exquisite taste and subtle workmanship, which issued from the shop of the "first goldsmith of the day," as he is named in contemporary records.

Throughout his life this branch of the art absorbed his talents and energies. His designs were so good that Benvenuto Cellini testifies to their having been used by sculptors

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878–9, p. 287. [2] Ibid., note to p. 288.

and painters; but his colouring was hard and formal, showing the defects of the goldsmith training.

These faults are obvious in the best specimen of his work, now in the National Gallery.[1] This picture was originally painted, in 1475, as an altar-piece for the Pucci family in the church of San Sebastiano dei Servi at Florence, and represents the *Martyrdom of S. Sebastian.* In spite of the defect of the colouring, the composition is beforehand with the age in vigour and power of design, the great technical skill of the artist being especially manifest in the foreshortening, and the expression of strong bodily effort, of the two soldiers in the foreground in the act of charging their crossbows.

Piero (1441–1489), the younger brother of Antonio, was the better colourist of the two. Both brothers had a leaning to the pagan and classical taste of the age, and took pleasure in representing mythological subjects. The *Combat of Hercules and the Hydra*, and the *Death of Antæus*, were painted by them in colossal proportions for the Casa Medici. These paintings have since perished, but two little pictures of the same subject are still to be seen in the Uffizi.

The figure of *Prudence* in the same gallery, one out of the series of *Virtues* painted by the Pollaiuoli for the Mercatanzia at Florence, is noticed as a specimen of strong, bold drawing, after the fashion of Andrea del Castagno, of a successful adaptation of the new method employed by the Peselli in colouring, and of careful, well-executed draperies. The rest of the series of figures are stowed away in the private magazines of the gallery.

The Pollaiuoli were among the first artists who made a study of anatomy with the view of making it serve a purpose in art. We shall find in the monument of Sixtus IV. in the Cappella del Sacramento in S. Peter's at Rome, an illustration of their elaborate study of the bones and muscles of the human figure.[2]

[1] No. 292.

[2] See concluding chapter.

SANDRO BOTTICELLI. Born 1446. Died 1510.

Alessandro, the son of Mariano Filipepi of Florence, was also apprenticed in his early youth to a goldsmith, named Botticelli; hence the name by which he is usually known. Alessandro, or "Sandro," as he was commonly called, soon turned aside from that branch of the art to follow the pleasanter study of painting, which, as we have seen, was closely connected with the sterner work of the goldsmith during the fifteenth century. Sandro set before him as a model Fra Filippo's style of painting, and was for some time his pupil; following his teaching with such diligence and success that at the death of Fra Filippo, Sandro remained one of the first masters in Florence. He assisted the Pollaiuoli in their work of decorating the Mercatanzia at Florence, but his *Fortitude*, the virtue which he chose to represent, is not an example of his best manner. The figure is that of a woman enthroned under a niche. She wears a winged helmet adorned with pearls, and wields a club. It is now in the Uffizi. His fresco of *S. Augustin*, in the Ognissanti, was another of his earlier paintings. Ghirlandajo was at the same time engaged in painting the head of *S. Jerome* on the opposite side of the choir, and the two painters were fired with generous rivalry. Vasari gives the palm to Botticelli, on account of the expression of concentrated thought which he has managed to convey to the countenance of S. Augustin.

The famous circular picture of the *Virgin Crowned by Angels* (now in the Uffizi), is one of the best specimens of Sandro's painting. With one hand the Virgin supports the Infant Saviour, while with the other she is in the act of writing the *Magnificat* on the leaf of a book held by an angel. The angel behind her throne is the portrait of

THE CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN. BY BOTTICELLI.

In the Accademia delle Belle Arti, Florence.

Lorenzo de' Medici. The conception was new and original, and the execution worthy of Fra Filippo in character, action, and colouring; but Botticelli's *Madonna* is of a more refined type, and was the beautiful original of the female heads repeated many times by this master, especially in the pictures where the same subject is represented with little variation, as in the Berlin and Louvre Galleries, and in our national collection.

The great *Coronation of the Virgin*, at the Florentine Academy, is considered more harsh in colour, but it shows a great mastery of action in the springing, dancing attitudes and floating drapery; yet, unlike the spiritual joy conveyed by Fra Angelico to his saints and angels in Paradise, the heavenly sphere, as Sandro represents it, appears like one of the earthly courts of the fifteenth century, with all its solemn pageantry translated into the clouds. The same spirit inspires the artist in his painting (now in the Uffizi) of the *Adoration of the Magi*, for Sta. Maria Novella, where he introduces Cosimo il Vecchio, as the first of the eastern kings, kneeling before the Virgin and worshipping the Infant Saviour, followed by Giuliano de' Medici, and Giovanni the son of Cosimo—all, Vasari tells us, living portraits[1]—with the retinue of each of the princes exactly rendered.

Botticelli's talents afterwards procured him the favour and patronage of Lorenzo il Magnifico, and he painted several pictures for the Casa Medici, in the classical and allegorical style which was the fashion of the time. Among these his *chef d'œuvre* was *Venus floating on a shell on the Ocean*, driven by two of the winds with a shower of roses towards the shore. It is now in the Uffizi. The *Birth of Venus*, and *Venus among the Graces*, are inferior examples of the same class of pictures, and are cited as showing the goldsmith's taste in representing luxurious richness of ornament and abundant jewellery.

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878–9, p. 315.

But the allegorical picture of the *Calumny of Apelles* (now in the Uffizi) shows Botticelli to have been a student both of sculpture and architecture. The vehemence of Sandro's action, an exact contrast to that of his master Fra Filippo, who was all repose, is nowhere more shown than in this painting. Sandro's love of movement, his quaint, fanciful conceptions and brilliant colouring, have been made familiar to us in his illustration of Boccaccio's story of *Nastagio degli Onesti*.[1] These four panels were originally painted for the Casa Pucci in 1487, for the wedding of Pier Francesco di Giovanni Bini with Lucrezia Pucci.

Besides these decorative paintings, Sandro was employed, as the chief historical painter of the day, to paint the effigies of the conspirators in the famous "Congiura de' Pazzi," on the walls of the Palazzo Pubblico. The fame of his paintings caused him to be summoned to Rome, to share in the decoration of the Sixtine Chapel.[2]

His labours were munificently rewarded by Pope Sixtus IV., but Sandro was of an improvident disposition, and quickly squandered all his money in Rome. He returned to Florence totally impoverished, but found a new scope for his energies in designs for engraving. He was one of the first artists to engrave some of his own designs; but his illustrations of Dante, the best specimens of his work, were engraved by Baccio Baldini, and belong to the edition commented by Cristoforo Landino, and printed in Florence in 1481.

At the close of his life he became a devoted adherent of Savonarola, and gave up, it is said, his profession as a painter. Under such auspices it is most probable that he did renounce the secular subjects which had been hitherto expressed by his pencil; but competent critics have decided that the picture of the *Nativity of our Saviour*, recently added

[1] Winter Exhibition of Old Masters at Burlington House, eleventh year, 1879–80; Nos. 212, 213, 253, 254, lent by Mr. F. R. Leyland.

[2] See concluding chapter.

to the collection in the National Gallery,[1] must belong to thi later period of Sandro's life, more especially as the inscription would refer to the troubles in Italy, so eloquently foretold by Savonarola, which must then have reached their height. Sandro Botticelli died in 1510, and therefore outlived by some years the great preacher and reformer of Italy.

THE PRINCIPAL WORKS OF BOTTICELLI.

BERLIN. MUSEUM.

Madonna and Child enthroned with Angels.
Madonna and Child and the two S. Johns (*formerly, it is said, in Santo Spirito, Florence*).
Portrait of a Young Woman (*supposed to be "la bella Simonetta"*).
Portrait of Giuliano de' Medici.
The Annunciation.
Venus (*study for the painting in the Uffizi*).
S. Sebastian (*formerly ascribed to Antonio del Pollaiuolo*).

FLORENCE. ACCADEMIA.

Virgin enthroned with Saints (*from the Convent of Sant' Ambrosio, Florence*), ["*Probably by Andrea del Castagno.*"—*Crowe and Cavalcaselle.*]
The Coronation of the Virgin, with SS. John the Evangelist, Augustin, Jerome, and Eloisius (*from the Convent of San Marco, Florence*).
and its Predella. The Annunciation: and four scenes from the Lives of SS. John the Evangelist, Augustin, Jerome, and Eloisius.
The Virgin and Child, and with Saints (*from Santa Barbara, Florence*).
Allegory of Spring (*painted for the Villa Medici at Castello*).
S. Augustin dead, and Vision of S. Augustin (*from Santa Barbara, Florence*).
The Daughter of Herodias with the head of S. John: and the Resurrection (*from Santa Barbara, Florence*).

UFFIZI.

The Allegory of the Birth of Venus (*painted for the Casa Medici at Castello*).

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[1] No. 1,034. Purchased from Mr. W. Fuller Maitland, M.P., 1878.

FLORENCE. Uffizi (*continued*).

Judith cutting off the head of Holofernes.
Holofernes found Dead in his Tent.
The Calumny of Apelles.
Madonna and Child, and Angels. (*The Magnificat.*)
The Adoration of the Magi (*painted for Santa Maria Novella*).
Madonna and Child, and Angels.
Fortitude.
Madonna and Child.
The Annunciation.

Pitti Palace.

Holy Family, with Angels.
Portrait of "La bella Simonetta."
The Virgin, Infant Christ, and S. John.

Casa Alessandri.

Madonna and Child, with Angels.

Corsini Gallery.

Madonna and Angels.

San Jacopo di Ripoli.

The Coronation of the Virgin (*formerly ascribed to Ghirlandajo; given by Crowe and Cavalcaselle to Botticelli*).

San Salvadore d' Ognissanti.

S. Augustin (*fresco: painted in* 1480).

LONDON. National Gallery.

The Virgin and Child, S. John the Baptist, and two Angels.
The Virgin and Child, S. John the Baptist, and an Angel (*once in the possession of Giuliano da San Gallo*).
Madonna and Child.
Mars and Venus.
Venus reclining, with Cupids.
The Nativity of the Saviour. (*The inscription on it has been thus read by Professor Sidney Colvin: "This picture I, Alessandro, painted at the end of the year* 1500, *in the (troubles) of Italy in the half-time after the time during the fulfilment of the eleventh of S. John in the Second Woe of the Apocalypse, in the loosing of the devil for three years and a half. Afterwards he shall be chained and we shall see him trodden down as in this picture." The date has been variously read as* 1460, 1500, *and* 1511. 1500 *is that most generally accepted.*)

MILAN. Ambrosian Gallery.

Virgin and Child.

MUNICH. PINAKOTHEK.
Pietà.

PARIS. LOUVRE.
The Magnificat (*nearly similar to the picture in the Uffizi, Florence*).
The Virgin, Infant Christ, and S. John.

ROME. VATICAN. (*In the Sixtine Chapel.*)
The Miracles of Moses (*fresco*).
Death of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (*fresco*).
Temptation of Christ (*fresco*).
BORGHESE GALLERY.
Madonna, Infant Christ, S. John the Baptist, and Angels.

GHIRLANDAJO. BORN 1449. DIED 1494.

Domenico, di Tommaso Curradi di Doffo, Bigordi, called Ghirlandajo,[1] because of his skill in making silver garlands for the Florentine women, was the prince of the goldsmith painters. He was the son of a goldsmith, he was brought up as a goldsmith, and the name by which his paintings have come down to posterity was derived from his success in the goldsmith's art. Still, early in life, at the age of twenty-four, the trade became irksome to him, and the talents which had declared themselves in taking likenesses of the customers who frequented his father's shop, were placed under the direction of Alesso Baldovinetti.[2] Although the precision of his drawing, and the exquisite finish of his paintings, were no doubt due to his early training, his manner was not cramped by the formality of the goldsmith's style. He is entitled to rank among the first fresco painters of the age, and, like all the great masters of this branch of the art, he studied the immortal works of Masaccio in the Brancacci Chapel. The first fruits of his labours showed themselves in the frescoes of the Cappella de' Vespucci, at the church of Ognissanti

[1] In the Florentine dialect, Grillandaio.
[2] *Vide ante*, p. 85.

(1480). These were, unhappily, covered with whitewash in 1616, and with them perished the interesting portrait of Amerigo Vespucci, introduced by Ghirlandajo into one of his pictures. Those in the body of the church—including the picture of *S. Jerome*, the rival of Botticelli's *S. Augustin*—still exist; also a *Cenacolo* in the refectory, but this is fast perishing from the damp.[1] The frescoes in the Sala del Orologio, in the Palazzo Vecchio, were his next work, in which he painted simultaneously with Botticelli, Pollaiuoli, and other Florentine artists, till they were interrupted in their labours by the summons of Pope Sixtus IV. to decorate the Sixtine Chapel at Rome.[2] The wall pictures of the Chapel Sta. Fina in the *pieve* of San Gimignano—very beautiful decorative works—may be classed among Ghirlandajo's early paintings. But they were surpassed by those in the Sassetti Chapel, where his great powers as a fresco painter declared themselves in the most unmistakable manner. These were painted for a rich Florentine citizen, Francesco Sassetti, and the artist therefore chose for his subject scenes from the *Life of S. Francis.* The whole series of pictures is full of feeling and dramatic power, mark a different epoch in Italian art, which was carried another stage on its road to perfection by Ghirlandajo. The perfection which he aimed at was of a peculiar kind. He was not satisfied with the mere representation of the external form, or an imitation of the circumstances of nature in the abstract, however admirably rendered; but, with him, landscape, architecture, and portrait were destined to be combined in some grand composition to redound to the glory and honour of his native city.

In the frescoes of the Sassetti Chapel we find familiar features of Florentine and Pisan architecture in the backgrounds; and portraits of the most famous citizens—Lorenzo il Magnifico, Maso degli Albizzi, Agnolo Acciajuoli, Paolo

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878–9, note to p. 255. [2] See concluding chapter.

Strozzi, and others—introduced as spectators of the events chosen for illustration. The portrait is indeed an eminent characteristic of the work of Ghirlandajo; but, unlike Botticelli, in sacred pictures he follows the more devout school of thought, which only introduces the familiar figures and faces of the time as witnesses of, and not actors in, the incident represented by the picture.

The *Death of S. Francis*, surrounded by weeping monks of his order, is considered to be the most remarkable of the frescoes in the Sassetti Chapel. At the head of the bed a bishop chants the Litany, the figure so life-like that Vasari [1] tells us his silence alone proves him to be a painting and not a reality. The spectacles on his nose are said to be the first representation of them known in a picture.

The decoration of the Sassetti Chapel was completed by an altar-piece representing the *Adoration of the Shepherds*, now in the Accademia at Florence.

The subject was a very favourite one with Ghirlandajo; he represents it again in a painting at the back of the choir of the church "degli Innocenti" at Florence, besides the circular picture now in the Uffizi.

As soon as he had completed the Sassetti Chapel, Ghirlandajo received a commission from one of the great citizens of Florence, Giovanni Tornabuoni, to restore the choir of S. Maria Novella, replacing by new frescoes the damaged work of Andrea Orcagna. Ghirlandajo was to receive 1200 ducats for his work, and 200 more if he pleased his patron. On its completion, Tornabuoni expressed his complete satisfaction at the work, but endeavoured to excuse himself from payment of the 200 ducats. Ghirlandajo generously said that he was satisfied with his reward.

The work of re-decorating the choir should have fallen by rights on the family of the Ricci, who were the patrons of the altar, and whose arms were to be seen in every part of

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878–9, p. 255.

the church. But poverty compelled them to waive their right in favour of Giovanni Tornabuoni; it was stipulated, however, that their arms should be preserved intact in the most honoured positions. Tornabuoni agreed, but, nevertheless, had his arms engraved prominently on the front pilaster of the choir, on a much larger scale than those of the Ricci, who moreover had the mortification to see portraits of their richer rivals frequently figuring in Ghirlandajo's frescoes.

Ghirlandajo's task occupied him four years. On the right hand wall he represented the *History of S. John the Baptist*, on the left the *Life of the Virgin*.

In the picture which represents the *Birth of the Virgin*, we find in the lady who advances toward S. Anne the portrait of Ginevra de' Benci, the loveliest woman of her time.[1] The same portrait is again repeated in the corresponding picture of the *Meeting with Elizabeth*.

Mr. Ruskin compares Ghirlandajo's treatment of this last incident with Giotto's fresco of the same subject, in its recess behind the Marchesa Ridolfi's tomb in the same church, very much to the disadvantage of Ghirlandajo. His remarks are severe upon what he terms the "pompous" style of painting adopted by Ghirlandajo; and yet there is something so inimitable in his description of the two pictures, that we must cite the passage:—

"You can't easily see better pieces (nowhere more pompous pieces) of flat goldsmith's work. Ghirlandajo was to the end of his life a mere goldsmith with a gift of portraiture. And here he has done his best, and has put a long wall in wonderful perspective, and the whole city of Florence behind Elizabeth's house in the hill-country; and a splendid bas-relief in the style of Luca della Robbia in S. Anne's bedroom; and he has carved all the pilasters, and embroidered all the dresses, and flourished and trumpeted in every corner; and it is all done, within just a point as well as it can be

[1] *Vide* Introduction.

THE VISITATION. BY GHIRLANDAIO.

In the Louvre, Paris.

done; and quite as well as Ghirlandajo could do it. . . . Now, just for another minute, look at the *Birth of the Virgin;* a most graceful group (your Murray's Guide tells you) in the attendant servants. Extremely so,—also the one holding the child is rather pretty; also the servant pouring out the water does it from a great height without splashing, most cleverly. Also the lady coming to ask for S. Anne,[1] and see, the baby walks majestically and is very finely dressed."[2]

Still with all due deference to so great an authority upon art, we must give Ghirlandajo credit for a higher motive in art than the brilliant display of his abilities as a painter of portraits, classic ornament, and architecture in accurate perspective. His singular gift as a portrait painter—which even Mr. Ruskin will not deny—is again displayed in the opposite series, representing the *Life of S. John the Baptist;* in which he introduced, as spectators of Zacharias offering sacrifices in the Temple, living likenesses of the well-known brilliant satellites of Il Magnifico's Court—Angelo Poliziano, Cristoforo Landino, Marsilio-Ficino, and Demetrio Greco.

Two other prominent characteristics in the paintings of Ghirlandajo—his power of composition, and his art in grouping the figures—are exemplified in the *Preaching of S. John the Baptist*, another fresco in this series.

Although Domenico was the best colourist of the time in fresco, he has not the same success with his easel pictures, which are often marred by gaudy inharmonious tones. The *Madonna and Saints*, an altar painted for S. Giusto, now in the Uffizi; the *Adoration of the Magi*, the altar-piece of S. Maria Novella; and the *Visitation*, in the Louvre, are selected as the finest specimens of Domenico's numerous paintings of this class, which have been scattered all over the world. He adhered throughout his life to the use of tempera or fresco, and never attempted the new system of oils—perhaps discouraged by the failure of his master's (Alesso Baldovinetti) efforts to

[1] Ginevra de' Benci. [2] *Mornings in Florence*, No. ii. p. 27.

introduce it into wall painting. As a worker in mosaic, the *Annunciation* over the portal of Sta. Maria del Fiore is an instance of his great ability in that branch of the art.

His brothers, Davide and Benedetto, made it their distinct profession, and it was Davide who repaired the mosaics of the Duomo at Orvieto which had been entrusted to Domenico.

Domenico died at the age of forty-four, with sudden illness, in the prime of his manhood. "Would I had all the walls of Florence to paint!" he had exclaimed only a short time previously, fired with indomitable energy and conscious of his great powers. He had been twice married; his first wife, Constanza, died in 1485; his second choice was Antonia, a widow of San Gimignano. Ghirlandajo was, as a painter, industrious, painstaking, and always ready for work. He considered no order too unimportant for his acceptance, and was wont to tell his assistants that "they were not to refuse any commissions that should be brought to his shop, were it even for ladies' petticoat panniers; and that, if they did not choose to accept them, he would." His pupils were Granacci, Jacopo del Indaco, Alessandro of Florence, Sebastiano Mainardi his favourite assistant, and last, but not least, Michelangelo.

THE PRINCIPAL WORKS OF GHIRLANDAJO.

BERLIN. MUSEUM.

Madonna and Child, with Cherubim and SS. Paul, Clara, Francis, and Catherine (*executed with the assistance of pupils*).

Madonna and Child, with SS. John the Evangelist, John the Baptist, Francis, and Jerome (*SS. Francis and Jerome are in oil, by Granacci; the two S. Johns by another assistant*).

FLORENCE. ACCADEMIA.

Adoration of the Shepherds (*painted in* 1485 *for the Sassetti Chapel*).

FLORENCE. ACCADEMIA (*continued*).

Madonna, with SS. Thomas Aquinas, Dionysius the Areop. Clement, and Domenic.

UFFIZI.

Adoration of the Magi 1487. *a.*

Madonna and Saints (*painted for San Giusto, near Florence*).

PITTI PALACE.

Adoration of the Magi (*replica of a*).

SPEDALE DEGLI INNOCENTI.

Adoration of the Magi, 1488 (*in the Refectory*).

SAN SALVADORE D' OGNISSANTI.

S. Jerome, 1480.

Last Supper, 1480 (*in the Refectory*).

MONASTERY OF SAN MARCO (*in the Small Refectory*).

Last Supper.

SANTA MARIA NOVELLA (*in the Choir*).

Various frescoes :—

The Coronation of the Virgin; S. Francis before the Sultan; Death of S. Peter Martyr; the Annunciation; Departure of John the Baptist for the Desert; Portrait of Giovanni Tornabuoni and his wife.

Scenes from the Life of the Virgin :—

(i.) The Expulsion of Joachim from the Temple; (ii.) Birth; (iii.) Presentation in the Temple; (iv.) Marriage; (v.) Adoration of the Magi; (vi.) Massacre of the Innocents; (vii.) Death; (viii.) Assumption.

Scenes from the Life of S. John the Baptist :—

(i.) Zacharias in the Temple [*containing portraits of the Tornabuoni family, and other celebrated persons of Florence*]; (ii.) the Visitation; (iii.) Birth of John; (iv.) Naming of the child; (v.) John preaching repentance; (vi.) Birth of Christ; (vii.) the Daughter of Herodias dancing.

SANTA TRINITÀ (*in the Sassetti Chapel*).

Scenes from the Life of S. Francis :—

(i.) Renouncing his father's heritage: (ii.) Pope Honorius confirming the rules of the Franciscan order; (iii.) Before the Sultan; (iv.) Receiving the Stigmata; (v.) Resuscitation of a child of the Spini; (vi.) Funeral of S. Francis (*painted in* 1485).

PALAZZO VECCHIO (*in the Sala del Orologio*).

Glorification of S. Zenobio. 1481.

LUCCA. SAN MARTINO (*in the Sacristy*).

Madonna and Saints.

MUNICH. PINAKOTHEK.

Madonna and Child, with SS. John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, Michael, and Domenic.

On the wings—(i.) S. Catherine of Siena; (ii.) S. Lawrence. [*Part of an altar-piece executed from designs by Domenico Ghirlandajo for Santa Maria Novella, Florence. The exterior wings, finished by Davide and Benedetto Bigordi and Granacci, after Domenico's death, are in the Berlin Gallery.*]

PARIS. LOUVRE.

The Visitation, 1491 (*from Santa Maria degli Angeli, Florence*).

Portrait of an Old Man.

RIMINI. PALAZZO PUBBLICO.

S. Domenic, S. Sebastian, and another Saint.

ROME. VATICAN (*in the Sixtine Chapel*).

The Calling of Peter and Andrew. 1483.

SAN GIMIGNANO. PIEVE.

Vision of S. Fina, and Burial of S. Fina (*in the Cappella S. Fina*).

The Annunciation, 1482 (*in the Oratorio San Giovanni*).

VOLTERRA. SAN FRANCESCO.

Christ adored by Saints.

ANDREA DEL VERROCCHIO. BORN 1435. DIED 1488.

Goldsmith, master in perspective, sculptor, carver and painter; Andrea del Verrocchio makes a worthy climax to the Florentine art of the fifteenth century; and reveals, at the same time, the source of the versatile talents of his great pupil Leonardo da Vinci.

Andrea was the son of Michele de' Cioni. He did not belong to the family of Verocchio who were in existence at the time, but derived his name either from the truth of his sight—the keen-sighted—or because it was the name of the goldsmith Giuliano Verrocchi to whom he was apprenticed. While in his service, he executed many curious and beautiful works; among others, two goblets engraved with curious figures of animals and foliage, well-known to all the goldsmiths in

Vasari's time.[1] The fame of these goblets caused him to be employed by the Arte de' Mercatanti, to model two of the reliefs of the silver altar, which was then being prepared by the Pollaiuoli for S. Giovanni. Like the other Florentine artists of the day, he was also summoned to Rome,[2] to place his talents at the disposal of the imperious pontiff. On his return from Rome he pursued in Florence the sculptor's art; which he had brought to perfection in the study of the antiques of the ancient capital of the world. His works are few, and little known; but among others we may instance a life-size statue of *David*, which, when finished, was placed at the head of the Palace stairs, and is now to be seen in the Uffizi; the figure of the *Virgin* above the sepulchre of Leonardo Bruni Aretino in Sta. Croce; two bronze heads of *Alexander the Great and Darius*, presented by Lorenzo il Magnifico to Mathias Corvinus, King of Hungary; and his representation of the *Incredulity of S. Thomas*, in bronze, for the church of Or San Michele.

Andrea del Verrocchio is said to have been the first artist who took casts in plaster from life, as aids to the study of form. He was a careful student of nature, and his designs—some of which have been preserved to us—have the admirable precision and clearness natural to a carver in metal, but he never succeeded in rendering them in colour.

These defects are visible in the one authentic picture which he has left behind him in Florence of the *Baptism of Our Saviour;* and they are, perhaps, made more evident by contrast with the grace and beauty of one of the angels, supposed to have been introduced into the picture by Leonardo da Vinci.

In England one of the few paintings by Verrocchio, still extant, is in the possession of Mr. W. S. Dugdale, of Merevale, Warwickshire. It is painted on panel, 2 feet by 1 foot 9 inches. It represents our Saviour crucified between the two

[1] See Vasari, ed. 1878–9, p. 359. [2] See concluding chapter.

thieves: the blessed Virgin and another woman, perhaps the Magdalen, on her knees clasping the cross, and S. John. Two angels, nearly the same size as the figures in the foreground, in the upper corners, are in the act of adoration. Jerusalem is seen in the distance.

As a sculptor, if Verrocchio had given no other proof of his skill, his fame might securely rest on the equestrian statue of *Bartolommeo Coleoni* at Venice, the last work of his life (see illustration). A masterpiece of its age, it remains a masterpiece to the present day; and while it makes up for the loss of Leonardo's productions of the same kind, it explains where the great pupil of Verrocchio learnt his thorough knowledge of the form, action, and anatomy of the horse.

But although Verrocchio's talent in modelling a horse was universally accepted, the Venetians seem not to have placed such entire confidence in his power of representing the rider, and therefore proposed to entrust this part of the commission to Giacomo Vellano, da Padova. Andrea, as soon as this scheme became known to him, roused to just indignation, broke the model of his horse to fragments, and went back to Florence. The Signoria bade him beware of ever returning to Venice, for if he did so his head would pay the forfeit. To which Andrea made answer that they had better take care what they were about; because, although they had the power of chopping off men's heads, they were unable to put them on again; and certainly they could not replace his, though he could make another head as good as, and better than, the one he had broken off his horse. The Venetians, pleased with his spirit, invited him back to Venice to execute the model as he thought best, offering him a double commission for his pains. Those who have seen the magnificent countenance and attitude of Bartolommeo Coleoni, as he sits on his bronze steed in the Piazza outside SS. Giovanni e Paolo, know that the Venetians have had no cause to regret their bargain.

BARTOLOMMEO COLEONI. BY ANDREA DEL VERROCCHIO.

In the Piazza outside SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Venice.

The model was complete; but in casting it, owing to the great heat of the furnace, the sculptor caught a cold, of which he died in a few days.[1] In his will he had entrusted the completion of his work to his pupil, Lorenzo di Credi. The Venetians, disregarding his request, placed it instead in the hands of Alessandro Leopardo, whose name is engraved on the girth of the horse. He was ever afterwards called by the people "Alessandro del Cavallo." The pedestal, also Verrocchio's design, is one of the finest of its kind, and scarcely less worthy of attention than the statue itself.

Andrea del Verrocchio was only fifty-three years of age when he died. His friends and pupils grieved sorely over his untimely end. We have mentioned that the great Leonardo da Vinci learnt the first principles of art under the guidance of Verrocchio; Pietro Perugino, an artist of almost equal fame, was also his pupil.

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878–9, p. 368.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FLORENTINE ARTISTS IN ROME.

"Study, therefore, the great works of the great artists for ever. Study, as nearly as you can, in the order, in the manner, and on the principles on which they studied. Study nature attentively, but always with those masters in your company; consider them as models which you are to imitate, and at the same time as rivals with whom you are to contend." —Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourse VI.*, p. 109.

VASARI tells us that, "of all the methods of painting, the fresco upon the wall is the most masterly and the most beautiful; because, in it the painter must do his work in one day, and at one stroke; whereas, in other circumstances, he may touch and *re*-touch it as often as he pleases." It was a custom much employed by the Greeks, and the old masters of the Renaissance adopted the same practice. The art consisted in working upon the fresh plaster, and in finishing a certain portion of the picture by the end of each day, while the plaster remained fresh. Then both dried together, the painting and the plaster, and there was no possibility of re-touching the work afterwards. If there was any delay, the plaster, exposed to the effects of heat and cold, sun and wind, became coated with a sort of crust, which blurred and stained the work. It was necessary to

keep the wall moist during the process, and the colours had to be of a special kind, vegetable and not mineral. The fresco painters required, above all things, a swift, dexterous, and resolute hand, a dexterity which was only acquired by years of study and practice, and great powers of calculation as to the tints which changed with the wall as it dried. Many of the painters who succeeded admirably well in tempera and oil-painting, failed in the fresco, which may be considered the highest kind of art, both on account of the great abilities it develops in the artist, and because, once done, it remains for ever.

Was it possibly the strong conviction of this durability which made Zeuxis so paint, that posterity might be his spectators, while he exclaimed with confidence, "In æternitatem pingo!" ("I paint for eternity!")

Vasari concludes his advice to the fresco painters by urging them to paint "Virilmente e non ritocchino a secco." ("With decision, and never to retouch their work when dry.") Sir Joshua Reynolds[1] chooses fresco painting as the illustration of that "great style" which he would have the ambition of every art student, for in it, he says, consists "the intellectual dignity that ennobles the painter's art, that lies the line between him and the mere mechanic, and produces those great effects in an instant which eloquence and poetry by slow and repeated efforts are scarcely able to attain."

Never was there so grand a field for the fresco painters as when Pope Sixtus IV., having erected the chapel which bears his name (1474), sent to Florence for the great masters in that special branch of the art to come and vie with one another in decorating the newly-finished walls. They came: Sandro Botticelli, Domenico Ghirlandajo, Cosimo Rosselli, and Luca Signorelli. More or less distinguished in their own country, these great masters surpassed themselves in

[1] *Discourse V.* p. 33.

the decoration of this chapel. Perhaps they were fired with generous emulation; perhaps the mere fact of their residence in the far-famed city enlarged their ideas, and gave them a fresh and more powerful grasp of the great principles of their art.

Sandro Botticelli was chosen to superintend the whole work. It was proposed that the frescoes should represent the *History of Moses* on one side of the chapel, and that of *Our Saviour* on the other; the intention being to place in contrast the old law and the new, the Hebrew with the Christian dispensations, types and prophecies with their fulfilment.[1]

Besides the general superintendence, Sandro undertook three of the subjects himself:—

1. *Moses's Miracles in Egypt.*
2. The *Fall of Korah.*
3. The *Temptation of our Saviour.*

All three paintings are still extant, and are reckoned by the critics as Botticelli's best productions, both on account of the spirit and vivacity of their action, and the brilliancy of their colouring; these two especial features of the painter's

[1] The series begins from the altar on the wall to the left:—

1. Journey of Moses and Zipporah. (Perugino.)
2. Moses's Miracles in Egypt. (Botticelli.)
3. Drowning of Pharaoh. (Rosselli.)
4. Moses receiving the Law: Adoration, and destruction of the Calf. (Rosselli.)
5. Fall of Korah and his Followers.' (Botticelli.)
6. Publication of the Ten Commandments, and Death of Moses. (Signorelli.)

On the wall to the right:—

1. The Baptism of Christ. (Perugino.)
2. The Temptation of Christ. (Botticelli.)
3. The calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew. (Ghirlandajo.)
4. The Sermon on the Mount. (Rosselli.)
5. The Investiture of S. Peter. (Perugino.)
6. The Last Supper. (Rosselli.)

style appear most vividly in the two paintings which relate to Moses, where he succeeds in rendering with extraordinary power the numerous figures in strong and varied action, the flutter of the draperies in the breeze, and all the richness of Eastern ornament. Being ignorant of the laws of distribution, he is tempted to overcrowd his paintings with figures; but some of the individual groups in his last painting of the *Temptation in the Wilderness* are equal in their beauty to any work produced by him either before or afterwards. Cosimo Roselli continued the representation of the life of Moses. He was not equal to his fellow-labourers in the power of design; to make up for this deficiency, he loaded his pictures with gold and brilliant colouring—a style which, if it pleased no one else, pleased the pontiff, who, having no real taste in the fine arts, commended Cosimo beyond all the other artists. Cosimo's best work in the Sixtine was the *Sermon on the Mount;* he was assisted in the landscape by Piero di Cosimo, who also was a better colourist than draughtsman.

The real claim of both artists to distinction is derived from their pupils, Fra Bartolommeo, the pupil of Roselli; Andrea del Sarto, the pupil of Piero di Cosimo.

Ghirlandajo continued the illustration of the Gospel history in the *Calling of SS. Peter and Andrew*, and the *Resurrection.* The last has been so much repainted that it can no longer be called Ghirlandajo's work; but the *Calling of SS. Peter and Andrew*, both for design and execution, is one of the noblest frescoes of the series.

Not only does Ghirlandajo exhibit in this painting his unsurpassed skill in the technical management of the fresco, but in the conception he rises far beyond the realism of the goldsmith's school, and gives the most solemn and striking side of the incident, making it the principal idea. Some critics have compared the grandeur and dignity of the figure of our Saviour with Masaccio's treatment of the same figure in his fresco of the *Tribute Money;* while others look upon

it as an anticipation of Raphael's *Miraculous Draught of Fishes*, and of his *Feed my Sheep*.

Thus does Ghirlandajo form the connecting link between the two great masters, Masaccio and Raphael. The nobility of his conception is, in this instance, enhanced by a vast landscape background, displaying the artist's accurate knowledge of the laws of linear perspective to which we have already alluded; the subordinate figures are admirably grouped, nor are the garments overcharged with gold and ornament—always the temptation of the goldsmith painters, as if the beauty of the figure increased in proportion to the richness of their apparel.

Luca Signorelli.

The name of Luca Signorelli (born 1441, died 1523), called, from his birthplace, Luca da Cortona, completes the group of the great fresco painters of the fifteenth century. Although not a Florentine by birth, Signorelli was an eminent painter of the Florentine school, and, as such, was called upon to take his share in the decoration of the Sixtine Chapel. He carried on the series illustrating the history of Israel, and painted the *Publication of the Ten Commandments* and the closing scenes of the life of Moses.

Vasari places these works as the highest of all the frescoes in the Sixtine Chapel; but, although equal to Ghirlandajo in the grandeur of his conception, Signorelli is more coarse in his selection of individual forms.

The pupil of Piero della Francesca, he possessed his master's gift of drawing the forms of the body anatomically, and was thus able to throw a wonderful spirit and expression into the various attitudes of his figures. He was a complete master of the delineation of the nude form, and was in this point only equalled by Michelangelo, whose immediate predecessor he was in this class of study. Michelangelo is

PARADISE. BY SIGNORELLI.

supposed to have borrowed many of his ideas from Signorelli's *Last Judgment* in Orvieto Cathedral—especially the principal figure, which in his hands lost much of the original nobility of the conception. The fresco was designed by Fra Angelico.

But although it would be in vain to look for the spiritual rendering of the saintly master, Luca Signorelli awakens at once our astonishment and admiration by his knowledge of human anatomy. This he displays by throwing his figures into every conceivable attitude never attempted before in art. We might choose, for an example, the *Fulminati*, or the *Wicked cast out of Heaven*, in which he foreshortens the falling figures with a daring success quite unapproached by any of the masters of the fifteenth century.

From the time of Niccolo Pisano up to that of Michelangelo, this fearful subject, the Last Judgment, always had an irresistible attraction for the minds of the great artists, who vied with one another in their endeavour to portray with equal vividness in sharp contrast the joys of the just and the despair of the wicked. Their efforts were, no doubt, greatly due to the influence of the *Divina Commedia*—and they were, in fact, rivals of Dante, endeavouring to depict in their art the scenes which he had rendered in his immortal poem.

They exhausted their invention in the effort to represent the frantic despair of the wicked at the sudden realisation of their awful condition; the body writhing with the torture of the mind in every conceivable attitude of pain and agony, so that the spectator turns shuddering away from such fearful scenes as Signorelli's *Last Judgment* in Orvieto, or that of Michelangelo at Rome. Unhappily, neither the artist nor the poet are able to depict with corresponding power the joys of the blessed. It would seem as if man, familiarised by a long apprenticeship with pain and sorrow, knew only too well how to represent them, either in poetry or on canvas,

but that his invention fails him to describe a joy which he cannot even approach with his imagination.

PORTRAIT OF SIGNORELLI. BY HIMSELF.
In the Cathedral of Orvieto.

Signorelli worked in Umbria, Perugia, Volterra, and Florence. His greatest works in fresco, besides those we

have already mentioned, were painted in the convent of Monte Oliveto, south of Siena, representing scenes from the *Life of S. Benedict*; and those in the sacristy of the church at Loreto representing the *Evangelists and Doctors of the Church* in the vaulting, and the *Conversion of S. Paul* upon the walls. His native city of Cortona was enriched by many of his works. Three powerful pictures adorn the choir of the Duomo :—

1. *The Institution of the Holy Communion*, remarkable because he departs from the usual custom of representing a long table running across the picture. He makes the disciples kneel on either side of our Saviour, who stands in the midst of them.

2. *The Descent from the Cross*, celebrated for the great number of beautiful heads, the power of the colouring, and the chiaroscuro, worthy of a later age.

3. *The Conversion of S. Thomas*, the least important of the series. Besides these in the sacristy, he painted the lunette of a Madonna, almost equal to a Leonardo in beauty. These were his principal paintings, but many other churches, in Cortona and its vicinity, can boast some beautiful works by Luca Signorelli.

Luca Signorelli lived to a great age. In his eighty-second year he undertook one of the frescoes in the new palace built by Sylvio Passerini, Cardinal of Cortona, about a mile out of the city. The subject of the fresco was to have been the *Baptism of our Saviour*, but he died before it was finished. Besides his very singular genius, he was a man of great industry, who thoroughly mastered every subject he undertook, and then treated it with unfaltering decision and energy. He was no doubt the greatest fresco painter of his age, but he also painted movable pictures and altar-pieces of great value which have found their way to the various galleries of Europe. Vasari, who was personally acquainted with him, describes him as a man of blameless life, and gentle courteous manners ;

and, like the true artist he was, most anxious to impart the result of his labour and experience to his pupils, to enable them to follow in the path which he had opened to them—a path which led straight to that perfection of design illustrated by the immortal works of the succeeding century.

Besides the decoration of the Sixtine Chapel by the fresco painters there was work also in Rome for the Florentine goldsmiths and sculptors. The huge silver figures of the Apostles which stood on the altar in the Pope's Chapel were missing. Andrea del Verrocchio was sent for from Florence to supply them. Inspired by the treasures of antique sculpture which surrounded him, Verrocchio abandoned the goldsmith art for that of the sculptor and statue maker, and, after casting several small figures in bronze, embarked in the large undertaking of a marble tomb for the wife of Francesco Tornabuoni, with bas-reliefs representing scenes from her life, very finely sculptured, which was placed in the Minerva, but has since been removed thence.

The Pollaiuoli were also summoned by the successor of Sixtus IV—Innocent VIII—to adorn the tomb of one who had, from whatever motive, been so keen a patron of the fine arts. They spent themselves in the effort to produce a monument befitting the occasion, which is still to be seen in the Cappella del Sacramento bearing their name and the date 1493.

It has been made the subject of careful criticism by the great writers on art.[1]

"The pontiff (Sixtus IV.) lies at full length on the lid of a sarcophagus, on the corners of which are figures of Virtues and ornaments in relief. The piece is remarkable for its successful distribution and the beauty of its ornamentation; but the rigid and exaggerated action, the searching study of the muscular developments of flesh, the realistic coarseness of the joints and extremities, the defective draperies, accuse

[1] Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. ii. p. 388.

an absence of the idea of severe sculptural simplicity, or prove that the hardness and angularity incidental to the casting of bronze were not to be overcome, when the artist attempted to realize too many of the details of movement in the limbs and extremities, or in the tendons and muscles."

The tomb of Innocent VIII. now in the Cappella della Concezione was also the work of the Pollaiuoli; and it was superior to that of Sixtus IV. The subject was differently treated, the Pontiff being twice represented; first, seated on high, the right hand in the act of Benediction, the left holding a lance; the second time he is represented at the foot of the monument in a recumbent attitude.[1]

The Pollaiuoli died in Rome, and are buried in the church of S. Piero in Vincoli.

Such was the state of art in Italy at the decline of the fifteenth century. Much progress had been already made in painting from life, and the heads of the figures are characterised by a truth and vivacity not surpassed even in the present day. The painting of the hands and feet was by no means so excellent, and there was still great scope for improvement in representing the ideal beauty—instead of the bare imitation—of the form. Fulness of design, harmony of colour, ærial perspective, variety in composition, freedom of the pencil,—still somewhat cramped even in the hands of the greatest artists; all these were necessary to complete that perfection of art which belongs to the succeeding age. In Florence every surrounding circumstance combined to promote this improvement. The taste for fine architecture was rapidly spreading all over Italy: the most beautiful buildings, cathedrals, public and ducal palaces in Florence, Rome, Mantua, Venice, Umbria, and Rimini were the creation of this century. When their magnificent external proportions were complete, the internal decoration followed as a matter of course. There

[1] Vasari, ed. 1878-9, p. 296.

was a universal demand for the painter and sculptor—and thus arose among the artists that noble emulation and interchange of ideas so conducive to the progress of art.

The study of poetry, analogous to that of painting, was likewise in the ascendant; investing the age with that golden halo, which, ever ready to shine upon the sister arts, does not shed so brilliant a light upon the severer studies of science. These circumstances prepared the way for the most glorious era in painting, when the schools of Italy, fired with generous rivalry, each developed a decided character of its own—some one peculiar excellence, illustrated by some famous master—which, as it has been aptly described by one of their great artists, procured for each school its own special claim to distinction.

"Chi farsi un buon Pittore brama e desia
Il disegno di Roma abbia alla Mano
La *Massa* coll' *ombra Veneziano*
E il degno colorir di Lombardia
Di Michel Angelo la terribil via.
Il *vero natural* di Tiziano
Di Coreggio lo stil puro e sovrano
E di un Raffael la vera simmetria
Del Tebaldi il decoro e il fondamento
Del dotto Primaticcio l'inventare
E un pò di grazia del Parmigianino."

APPENDIX.

TRANSLATIONS OF ITALIAN QUOTATIONS.

Page 1.

"Thou didst as one,
Who, journeying through the darkness, bears a light
Behind, that profits not himself, but makes
His followers wise."

CARY'S TRANSLATION.

Page 9.

"Zeuxis, Parrhasius, Polygnot, stand by,
Art in my hands became a silent nature;
Feeling and force I gave to every feature
My fish appear to swim, my birds to fly."

R. P.

Page 16.

"I painted—and the very truth my painting seemed to be
Each figure on my canvas with quick life appeared to glow
Every feature moving, speaking—let great Angelo
Teach the rest as his disciples, but learn alone from me."

R. P.

Page 25.

"And in that midst their sportive pennons wav'd
Thousands of Angels; in resplendence each
Distinct, and quaint adornment. At their glee
And carol, smiled the Lovely One of heaven,
That joy was in the eyes of all the blest."

CARY'S TRANSLATION.

Page 28.

"One, seraphic all
In fervency; for wisdom upon earth,
The other, splendour of cherubic light."

CARY'S TRANSLATION.

Page 31.

"Say, who that angel is that with such glee
Beholds our queen, and so enamoured glows
Of her high beauty, that all fire he seems.

* * * * *

In him are summed
Whate'er of buxomness and free delight
May be in spirit, or in angel, met;
And so beseems; for that he bare the palm
Down unto Mary, when the Son of God
Vouchsafed to clothe Him in terrestrial weeds."

CARY'S TRANSLATION

Page 41.

"And didst thou look
E'en thus, O Jesus, my true Lord and God?
And was this semblance thine?"

CARY'S TRANSLATION.

Page 44.

"I beheld a puissant One arrive
Amongst us, with victorious trophy crowned.
He forth the shade of our first parent drew
Abel his child, and Noah righteous man.
Of Moses lawgiver for faith approv'd,
Of patriarch Abraham: and David King.

* * * * *

—And others many more, whom he to bliss
Exalted."

CARY'S TRANSLATION.

Page 116.

"How to paint well who doth desire to know
Careful design will study well at Rome.
From Venice breadth of light and shadow come.
Of Lombard colouring mark the noble glow;
Then tread the awful path of Angelo.
See Titian's nature every eye beguile,
Correggio's chastening and imperial style.
The matchless symmetry of Raffaello,
Tibaldi's grave decorum and his ground;
In Primaticcio learned invention trace,
From Parmigianino steal a little grace."

R. P.

NOTE.

"TEMPERA."

(C. vi., Vasari, ed. 1878—9, vol. i. p. 183.)

OF THE USE OF DISTEMPER.

"BEFORE the time of Cimabue, the use of distemper both in panel and wall-painting was common among the Greeks; and afterwards it was a universal practice among Italian painters. These old masters used to prepare their panels by spreading a linen cloth over them, and glueing it firmly down, lest they should split at the joins. Over this they spread *ingesso*, a sort of prepared plaster, made from sulphuric acid and lime; and they then distempered their colours to lay upon this ground with yolk of egg, or 'tempera.' Their method of distempering was as follows:—They took the yolk of an egg and beat it up, they then mixed with the egg the tender shoots of a fig, in order that the milk of the fig combined with the egg might temper the colours to the different qualities with which they afterwards worked. Their colours were mineral, partly made by the alchymist, partly found in caves and grottos. All colours were good for this species of work, except white made from slaked lime, which was too strong for the purpose. The azures were tempered with glue or size, because the yellow of the egg was liable to turn them green, but the glue (size) preserved their own colour, also gum.

"This method can be pursued either with or without the preparatory chalk. In painting upon the wall when dry (as opposed to fresco when the plaster is fresh), the method is the same, only the wall is first prepared to receive the tempera colours with hot size. The colours themselves can also be tempered with size without being any the worse for it; it was a practice with many of the old masters, whose works have remained for hundreds of years in their first beauty and freshness. Certainly this freshness is most obvious in Giotto's works, for there is not one of them which does not now appear as fresh as when it was first painted two hundred years ago.[1]

"The recent discovery of the oil colours has caused many to lay aside the tempera, so that we see this new method constantly employed now both in panel painting, and other works of importance."

Still more elaborate recipes for the illumination of books are to be found in the Monk Theophilus's "Schedule of Different Arts,"[2] already mentioned. We give one or two at full length as instancing the minute care and pain required for one preparation of the colours before using them.

EXTRACTS FROM "SCHEDULE OF DIFFERENT ARTS."

CHAPTER XXXI.

HOW GOLD AND SILVER ARE LAID IN BOOKS.

"Afterwards take pure minium (red lead) and add to it a third part of cinnabar (vermilion), grinding it upon a stone with water. Which, being carefully ground, beat up the clear of the white of an egg, in summer with water, in winter without water; and when it is clear, put the minium into a horn, and pour the clear upon it, and stir it a little with a piece of wood put into it, and with a pencil fill up all places with it upon which you wish

[1] The first edition of Vasari was published 1550.

[2] *Vide ante*, chapter on Oil Painting.

to lay gold. Then place a little pot with glue over the fire, and when it is liquified pour it into the shell of gold, and wash it with it. When you have poured which into another shell, in which the purifying is kept, again pour in warm glue, and holding it in the palm of your left hand, stir it carefully with the pencil, and lay it on where you wish, thick or thin, so, however that there be little glue, because, should it exceed, it blackens the gold and does not receive a polish ; but after it has dried, polish it with a tooth or bloodstone, carefully filed and polished, upon a smooth and shining horn tablet. But should it happen, through negligence of the glue not being well cooked, that the gold pulverises in rubbing, or rises on account of too great thickness, have near you some old clear of egg, beat up without water, and directly with a pencil paint slightly and quickly over the gold ; when it is dry again rub it with the tooth or stone. Lay in this manner silver, brass, and copper in their place and polish them."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HOW COLOURS ARE TEMPERED FOR BOOKS.

"These things thus accomplished, make a mixture of the clearest gum and water as above, and temper all colours except green, and ceruse, and minium, and carmine, with clear of egg. Compose all preparations of colours for a book as above, if you want them for painting figures. All colours are laid on twice in books, at first very thinly, then more thickly ; but twice for letters."

CHAPTER XL.

OF INK.

"To make ink, cut for yourself wood of the thorn-trees in April or May, before they produce flowers or leaves, and collecting them in small bundles, allow them to lie in the shade for two, three, or four weeks until they are somewhat dry. Then have wooden mallets, with which you beat these thorns upon another piece of hard wood, until you peel off the bark everywhere, put which immediately into a barrelful of water. When you have filled two or three, or four, or five barrels with bark and water, allow them so to stand for eight days, until the waters imbibe all the sap of the bark. Afterwards put this water into a very clean pan, or into a cauldron, and fire being placed under it, boil it ; from time to time, also, throw into the pan some of this bark, so that whatever sap may remain in it may be boiled out, when you have cooked it a little, throw it out, and again put in more ; which done, boil down the remaining water unto a third part, and then, pouring it out of this pan, put it into one smaller, and cook it until it grows black and begins to thicken ; add one-third part of pure wine, and putting it into two or three new pots, cook it until you see a sort of skin show itself on the surface ; then taking these pots from the fire, place them in the sun until the black ink purifies itself from the red dregs. Afterwards take small bags of parchment, carefully sewn, and bladders, and pouring in the pure ink, suspend them in the sun until all is quite dry ; and when dry, take from it as much as you wish, and temper it with wine over the fire, and, adding a little vitrol, write. But if it should happen through negligence that your ink be not black enough, take a fragment of the thickness of a finger, and putting it into the fire, allow it to glow, and throw it directly into the ink."

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(The Names of Paintings are printed in *italic*.)

THE END.

R. CLAY, SONS, AND TAYLOR, PRINTERS